COLLECTIVITY, PARTICIPATION, AND SOLIDARITY WITHIN THE AFRO-ECUADORIAN COMMUNITIES OF GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to identify factors that promoted or prohibited participation in Afro-Ecuadorian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador. This project also focuses on the formation and function of collectivity and solidarity in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil. Guayaquil is the largest and most populated city in Ecuador, as well as the economic capital of the republic, and now due to migration, it is the largest city associated with blackness. Afro-Ecuadorians have suffered invisibility, racism, racial inequality and racial discrimination, and as a result, they have experienced varying disparities in education, health, and employment in their communities. Assuming that Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs help Afro-Ecuadorians gain access to resources that are difficult to obtain, participation in these organizations should be significant.

In order to collect the data for this dissertation, I engaged in ethnographic methods, which entailed convenience sampling and snowball sampling. I also created surveys, which I used to speak to 150 people who lived and worked in Guayaquil. In addition to the surveys, I conducted interviews with willing participants who had completed the surveys. Both the surveys and the interviews contained closed and open-ended questions. The questions focused on a variety of topics, some were more focused on demographics, and others focused more on actual experiences and expectations. The methods utilized also included participant observation and taking pictures.

The data I collected was very informative, even though the results of the dissertation did not support the assumption that there would be higher levels of Afro-Ecuadorian participation in the Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in Guayaquil. The methods utilized did produce information about

factors that impact Afro-Ecuadorian participation, and the roles of collectivity and solidarity in Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil. The one-on-one interviews provided enough information to develop an additional theme that I did not originally anticipate. This theme involved the power of words (namely the word *negro*), and the negative impact that it has had on the psyches of Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil. Lastly the people who participated in this study helped me create suggestions aimed to turn a somewhat hostile Ecuadorian society into one that is more hospitable, and where Afro-Ecuadorians would feel more accepted.

These suggestions include incorporating positive imagery of Afro-Ecuadorians in the media, so negative stereotypes and stigmas associated with Afro-Ecuadorians would decrease and self-esteem, and acceptance for Afro-Ecuadorians would increase; adopting an Afro-Ecuadorian curriculum to educate everyone on Afro-Ecuadorian and culture; increasing collectivity that is not limited to Afro-Ecuadorian communities, but includes non-Afro-Ecuadorian communities and international communities; providing Afro-Ecuadorians with more opportunities for educational and economic empowerment; and creating a culture of promoting blackness through the use of Negritude.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Denise and Tommy Hicks, without your support and encouragement I never would have gone to college. To my husband, Jean-Claude, for helping me get through this Ph.D. program. To my children, Jean-Claude III and Kennedy-Jeannise, who have motivated me to become better at everything I do. And to my grandmother Willie Mae Parker, who worked as a custodian in a university so that I could graduate with a Ph.D. from one. I love you all very much!

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two amazing babies, you started a graduate program, and completed it, and we're still together today. We've beaten the odds! You've been a constant supportive presence in my life, and thank you for all of it! I love you!

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Contributors Section

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Dr. Cynthia A. Werner, advisor and Dr. Sara B, Busdiecker, co-advisor of the Department of Anthropology, Dr. Alain Lawo-Sukam of the Department of Hispanic Studies, and Dr. Violet M. Showers-Johnson, former director of the Africana Studies Program. All work for the dissertation was completed independently by the student.

Funding Sources Section

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

I want to walk you through my first time traveling to South America, more specifically, to Ecuador. In all of my previous traveling experiences in Latin America, I was used to being the tallest, darkest-skinned individual in the group, in the plaza, and on the bus; but this time in Ecuador I learned from my host father, who was not, nor did he look like an Afro-Ecuadorian, that there were many "*negros*" living in the coastal regions of the northwestern providence in his country. Being the inquisitive and adventurous person that I am, I had to make plans to go to this region called Esmeraldas. Esmeraldas was the name of a city and a province located in the northwestern coastal part of the country, where black people were, according to my host father. I exited my bus, after having lived, slept and ate on it for the past 12 hours, in the city of Esmeraldas. Then I saw people, who looked just like me, all around me. Not only did they look like they could be members of my family, they greeted me as such… "Hello sister, how are you? How is your family? How was your trip?" It was hard to remember that I was miles and miles away from home, on another continent, in another hemisphere and speaking a foreign language.

This experience was extremely extraordinary to me. How could this be possible? I'm a black girl from North-Eastern Ohio, my whole family only speaks one language, English, and all of my grandparents have roots that go way back in the deep south of the United States. This was such a life-changing event for me but I couldn't grasp it in that moment because I was just in awe of my new surroundings, just in awe bout being able to carry on conversations in Spanish with black people who looked like me, in another country. I ended up in Ecuador because my initial plan was

just to go to another Spanish-speaking country before I started my Spanish MA program at a university in western Michigan, so that my Spanish would be better. I had no idea that before I even finished my Master's degree, that I would have taken various classes about the African diaspora in Latin America from a cultural anthropologist at my university and would have had my mind blown over and over again. I never would have guessed that I would have applied and been accepted to a doctoral program at another university in central Texas to become a cultural anthropologist focused on the African diaspora in Latin America, focused on the lives and experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians.

The previous paragraphs detail the tumultuous events of my life right before I began my doctoral program. Now, all of my classes have been completed, all exams passed, proposals accepted, and fieldwork finished. The first time I went to Ecuador I was in awe about the afro-descendants living there, that I had no previous knowledge of, and this was in 2008. It was shocking to me and others that I shared my experience with because, on one hand, the United States' public-school system does not consider the fact that the slave trade's dispersal of Africans all over the Americas and the Caribbean as relevant information. Then, on the other hand, it was not really shocking because it was a part of the plan. Andrews notes how "most Africans were brought to the New World to produce precious metals or tropical plantation crops," (2004, 14) which was the plight of the ancestors of the Afro-Ecuadorians living in Playa de Oro. But as colonial economies developed, activities for the enslaved began to increase. Enslaved Africans and their descendants would eventually have to "work in plantation agriculture, mining, urban occupations, and produce crops for local consumption. Slaves worked as cowboys on cattle ranches in Argentina, Uruguay, Southern and Northeastern Brazil, in Venezuela and Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic," (Andrews 2004, 15). Then, export-colonies that had a majority indigenous labor force, places such as Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Argentina also had African slave populations in "sub-regions

associated with specific forms of labor: sugar cultivation, in Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Argentina; urban slavery which was most important in coastal cities such as Buenos Aires, Cartagena, Lima, and Montevideo, but was significant even in highland cities such as Potosí (Bolivia) and Quito; and gold mining" (Andrews 2004, 17).

Figure 1. My picture in the Choco Rainforest near Playa de Oro. Photo taken by the author in 2012.

However, afro-Latinos throughout Latin America had been invisibilized for so long by the leaders of Latin American countries because being black and having blacks in your country was (and arguably still is) stigmatized and problematic: "there was nothing more ignominious than being a black or descended from them," (Andrews 2004). This ill-treatment of the ruling classes towards afro-descendants, which began in the colonial period centuries ago as a by-product of the kidnapping of people from various places in Africa and enslaving them in the Americas, has produced long-

lasting resentment and disparities that still have consequences today for afro-descendants. In Ecuador, like many other *mestizo* (descendants of the Spanish and indigenous people who represent the population and power-wielding majority) majority nations, the ruling majority mestizo classes have managed to keep disparities high and opportunities low for afro-descendants (Hooker 2005, 2009; Sheriff 2003; Wade 1995; Rahier 1995).

In 2012, I returned to Ecuador with the lens of a cultural anthropology student. I was tasked with finding a research site. This assignment allowed me to travel throughout the republic of Ecuador. I visited grand metropolises such as Quito, which is practically located in the middle of the country, and Guayaquil an extremely important coastal port city in the southwestern region. Both Quito and Guayaquil are the most heavily-populated cities in the republic. Carapungo, a smaller city near Quito, which was really diverse, was also a city I had the privilege of visiting. There I found people of African descent who were not only Ecuadorian but from Colombia and Haiti, as well as some indigenous people. I participated in an Afro-Ecuadorian meeting on "*racismo*" in Santo Domingo de los Colorados while I was *en route* to Esmeraldas (an area commonly referred to the "*cuna,*" or birthplace of Afro-Ecuadorian people and their culture) and Borbón, in the northwest.

I traveled through Limones and Selva Alegre, which were two of the smallest pueblos I've ever visited. They were very rural areas miles away from any urban city. I was fortunate enough to visit to the most northern village of Afro-Ecuadorians in the Chocó lowland rainforest called Playa de Oro. There I met a village chief and was taken on a tour of part of the rainforest that was land deeded to the Afro-Ecuadorians who resided in that area. Here I experienced what sleeping in the forest was like. There was rain that pelted the tin roof of my cabin. Then there were animals and insects that sang all night long. The sounds of nature were so foreign and deafening to me that it was quite a frightening experience. I really just wanted to get back to the city and hear horns honking,

engine gears shifting, the occasional siren, and people talking, all noises that were much more familiar to me, and oddly comforting. After returning from the rainforest I visited San Lorenzo, also in the northwest region of the providence, closer to the Colombian border. Ibarra, San Gabriel, and Otavalo are also cities that I traveled to the northern region of the republic, (see Figures 1-2).

Figure 2. Map of Ecuador with some of the cities I visited in 2012, (Infoplease 2018).

I went in search of areas associated with blackness due to the populations of afro-descendants who had been living there or had been migrating to those cities presently and over time (Rahier 1998; Whitten 1974). There were only two cities I traveled to that were not associated with blackness, even though afro-descendant people could be seen on occasion. Otavalo, which is strongly associated with indigeneity and a popular tourist area, was an interesting example of possible results from the Indigenous social movement and very strong traditions. In this city, their culture, cultural products, and indigeneity were highlighted (see Figure 3). I saw women working in banks, while wearing their traditional clothing (long dark skirts, woven belts, and sandals made from cactus fibers called alpargatas), restaurants, the main market place and other offices.

Figure 3. Vendor in Otavalo Market. Photo taken by the author in 2012.

Two aspects of this visit really struck me as rare, and in complete contrast to anything else I had ever seen. First, banks are usually mestizo spaces where it would be uncommon to see any non-mestizo working as anything except in the capacity of a security guard or a custodian. Second, people who work in banks always wear uniforms that don't bear any similarities to traditional indigenous clothing. They look very similar to the uniforms you would see at any bank in the United States: formal attire, ties, vests, and suits. Then San Gabriel, a town in the mountainous region near Ibarra, was very mestizo, culturally speaking (Golash-Boza 2010). Most of the people I saw wore regular clothing in comparison to the people I saw in Otavalo. The only reason why this town made my list was because of the town's festival and parade. A group of Afro-Ecuadorian Marimba dancers from Ibarra had been invited to perform and they invited me along for the trip. The fact that this town is not associated with blackness but wanted to have Marimba dancers highlights or emphasizes the idea that the Afro-Ecuadorian folk culture is more acceptable and sought after than Afro-Ecuadorians.

When the tour was over, I returned home to the United States in order to further develop my project. I wanted to know about Afro-Ecuadorians relationships with Afro-Ecuadorian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), so I elected to investigate the factors that promoted or prohibited participation in said organizations. Once I decided on the main focus of my research, I decided on a site. After the whirlwind tour of Ecuador that I was fortunate enough to take part in, I decided to stay in the concrete jungle of Guayaquil. In addition to studying the factors that promoted or prohibited participation, I also wanted to know how collectivity and solidarity formed in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil.

Guayaquil, Ecuador

Guayaquil is Ecuador's largest city with an estimated population of 2.3 million people, according to the 2010 national census (INEC 2011), and it's the largest city I have ever lived in. Historically, Guayaquil has been one of the cities least associated with blackness, a fact that isn't surprising since the most references pertaining to blackness have primarily focused on the north-western providence of Esmeraldas and the republic's capital Quito, (Rahier 1998; 1999; 2003; Whitten 1965; 1974; Whitten et al. 1995). Esmeraldas is rumored as being the birthplace of blackness in the country, while Quito has been a city that many have migrated to. However, Guayaquil has been converted into the economic capital of Ecuador and as a result of that, it has seen as tremendous rise of migrations from all over the republic. Not even fifty years passed as the population skyrocketed from 568,000 to 2,350,915 in 2010. Guayaquil has also been converted into the unofficial capital of blackness as it has the highest population of Afro-Ecuadorians in the country at 246,793 which represent 23%, they also represent 10.9 percent of the total population in the city, according to the 2010 census (INEC 2011). Contrary to popular beliefs, *afro-guayaquileños* are not a new phenomenon to the city because afro-descendants have lived in the city since its foundation in 1537. Guayaquil was once used as a slave port and Africans were brought there to be sold into slavery (Garcia Serrano 2013). According to Michael Handelsman, a great deal of the population in Guayaquil was black, (Handelsman 1999).

Choosing Guayaquil as a research site proved to be quite challenging, as the city is extremely immense. It is officially divided into twenty-one "*parroquías"* or neighborhoods, sixteen of them are urban and five of them are rural (Garcia Serrano 2013). However, if you were to speak with someone who lives in Guayaquil they would argue that many more neighborhoods exist in the city, nearly forty. Some people think that Guayaquil is actually divided into "thirty-seven territories that

are smaller, but possess common characteristics in terms of cultural, social and historic affinity," (CEPAL 2006, 3). In this popular opinion, there are fifteen *parroquías* in the "popular urban section," seventeen in the consolidated sector and the remaining five are rural *parroquías* (Garcia Serrano 2013). The fifteen *parroqías* in the "popular urban sector" are located in the peripheral zones on the outskirts of the city in an area known as the "*suberbios*" or the suburbs. There is a stark contrast between suburbs of major U.S. cities and the suburbs of Guayaquil, they are not ideal places to live. In Guayaquil, people don't escape to the suburbs they get pushed there. These suburbs are the most vulnerable, socially, economically and environmentally unstable (Garcia Serrano 2013).

Figure 4. Cane houses on the mangrove banks of Isla Trinitaria. Photo taken by the author in 2012.

Guayaquil is seen as a type of dream city in Ecuador, it is a concept that is similar in nature to the Great Migration in the United States when millions of African Americans decided to leave the

south and travel north because of perceived economic opportunities and better lives. In Ecuador, the migration is from north to south and there are many families who leave the providence of Esmeraldas and decide to travel to the southern providence of Guayas, and find themselves staying in the city of Guayaquil, in addition to many mestizo and indigenous citizens. Garica Serrano notes, "since the 1950s and 1960s the city had been the preferred migratory destination for Blacks that lived on the coast, especially from the Esmeraldas providence," (Garcia Serrano 2013). To many individuals Guayaquil represented possibilities of financial success, stability and advancement, but for afro-Ecuadorians their experiences have been similar to those experiences of African-Americans who participated in the Great Migration, since they've found only "extreme conditions of poverty, racism and exclusion," (Garcia Serrano 2013).

Figure 5. Cleared mangrove banks on Isla Trinitaria. Photo taken by the author in 2012.

Living in an urban metropolis such as Guayaquil, where dominant white mestizo and elite mestizo populations control everything, Afro-Ecuadorians have had problems attaining the economic gains that many dreamed of realizing in the past and the present. National perceptions of race compound the disadvantages that are faced by Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil. For example, women are usually stuck in roles of domestic servants and nannies where they maybe be put into uncomfortable positions by both their male and female employers (Rahier; Johnson; personal interview in 2012). In an interview I conducted, one informant (an Afro-Ecuadorian woman) shared one of her job-hunting experiences where the employer told her she had all of the position's requirements, except for the desired appearance: her face was too dark (she's actually light brown-skinned) and this made her undesirable for the position.

Figure 6. Street view near Vencer o Morir on Isla Trinitaria. Photo taken by the author in 2012.

Many Afro-Ecuadorians have had extreme difficulty finding stable employment and have been trapped working menial jobs. The most common sources of income for Afro-Ecuadorian men consist of panhandling, being department store or bank security, construction laborers or selling fruit items or candy on busses and street corners. They have also encountered a great deal of hardship, having to live in squatter-like settlements on the outskirts or *suberbios* of Guayaquil, in mangrove swamps, (see Figures 4-7). The majority of *Afroguayaquileños* live in the "*sectores"* neighborhoods of *Los Guasmos, Fertisa, la Isla Triniteria, Batallon del Subuerbio, Cisne I and III* (all of which are located on the southern side of the city), *Prosperina, Fortín, Flor del Bastión, Bastión Popular* and *Mapasingue* (located on the northern side of town), and many of my participants either lived in these areas or knew of them (Garcia Serrano 2013).

City and state officials were aware of these dangerous conditions that migrants dealt with on a daily basis. Many of the neighborhoods in Guayaquil came into existence through the process of "invasions." In this process, residents bought rubble from construction projects in the city. Then they built up the mangrove riverbanks with the rubble in order to build homes made of sugar cane, wood, or concrete. Some even constructed homes in the river itself out of sugar cane, these houses were "supported" by tilts and seemed to float on top of the river, until there was a rise in the water level or a storm. Even with this risk of danger and insecurity, migrants flocked to these neighborhoods and others like it, for the illusion of "owning their own piece of land" and building their own homes. While I did witness residents building their own homes in this area, it was clear that the land would never belong to them legally, because it belonged to the city. Although initial "invaders" now have homes made of concrete and transportation in "walking distance" that get them throughout the city, they still live off the grid since these areas aren't mapped and haven't been planned by the city. The most popular form of transport in these areas are the "*tri-motos*" because of their small size and easy

mobility through the narrow “streets”. The electricity used in these areas is there due to the creative genius of people trying to make ends meet and some extremely long extension cords. All in all, the people living in these areas lacked the structure for public transit and lived in conditions that were both environmentally and sanitarily deficient (Garcia Serrano 2013).

Figure 7. Street view near Vencer o Morir with paved streets and sidewalks. Photo take by the author in 2014.

Those were images I saw in 2012, fortunately most people are no longer living in mangrove swamps or in such horrible conditions. The government has outlawed it and has provided safer and stable housing units in another area on the rim of the city. I thought these new units would be a welcomed sight for the people living on the mangroves, but when I went there to interview people, they were not that excited. Some lamented the fact that they are so much further away from their

jobs back on the other side of town.[1] I sympathized with that feeling, it took two busses and nearly two hours to get there from where I lived. Others felt confined by size of the units, unlike the homes they built before, custom homes were not allowed for the units the government supplied. Before I visited Sociovivienda, I mentioned it to participants in *la Bahía* market downtown and they referred to this area as "*las favelas"* and used a tone saturated with disgust. These homes aren't free, the tenants have to pay rent, but some can rent to own. The Sociovivienda homes are not centrally located, but much safer than a sugar cane home on a mangrove riverbank, (see Figure 8).

[1] Dr. Alain Lawo-Sukam, Texas A&M Department of Hispanic Studies, suggested that some may lament the move due to a symbolic religious connection that links the proximity of the river with spiritual ties to Africa.

Figure 8. Two Sociovivienda homes in the Sociovivienda complex. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

Aside from being recognized as the economic capital of the country, Guayaquil has also become a popular tourist destination because of its close proximity to the Galapagos Islands and the international airport that located in the city. This influx of international and national traffic has allowed the city to benefit from the money these people bring. The transit system is benefited from that growth, as has the historic downtown area. This *centro histórico* is not limited to being a main tourist attraction, as many businesses and places of interest for local *guayaquileños* are also located downtown.

Outline of This Dissertation

This dissertation is based on eight months of research and observations, which occurred through June and July 2008, July 2012 and concluded in August-December 2014. During these trips, I was able to witness Afro-Ecuadorians in the providences of Esmeraldas, Pinchincha, and Guayas, in the most popular cities of Esmeraldas, Quito and Guayaquil. I had the opportunity to interact with many people and even make some friends. This dissertation focuses on the Afro-Ecuadorian people living in Guayaquil and how they feel about their social movement and social movement organizations as expressed through their words and practices. It also focuses on how *solidaridad* (solidarity) and *colectividad* (collectivity) form and function in the *comunidades afroguayaquileñas* (communities of Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil).

This chapter focused on my initial experiences in Ecuador and what led to this dissertation research. It also contains information that highlights my experiences as an Afro-descendant in Latin America, but specifically South America. I also provide details on the city where I conducted the research for this dissertation, Guayaquil and the Afro-Ecuadorian population that resides there.

In the next chapter, I provide a review of the literature that covers topics in this dissertation. The topics addressed focus on the history of Afro-Latino studies, as well as race in Latin America. There are also topics concerning black experiences in Latin America, and how those experiences relate in terms of interactions, comparisons and collaborations with indigenous people. Another area of interest focused on types Afro-descendant participation in Spanish-speaking South American countries such as Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia.

Chapter Three details the methods selected to focus on the very specific population that captivated my interest. I utilized convenience sampling to meet people to survey, most of the time. On occasion, I also used snowball sampling, as some people introduced me to other contacts. Many

of my interviewees were surveyed, or I met them through a friend. The chapter details the encounters with my survey participants, where we conducted surveys, and the topics we discussed.

Chapter Four highlights some of the ethnographic details that I collected while I conducted my dissertation research. In this chapter, I describe various events that I witnessed and participated in. It is also a reflective chapter as I recount reactions to certain events and situations. It contains a list that details some of neighborhoods and organizations that I visited while I conducted research. I also explore different definitions of collectivity and solidarity as well as different explications for how they are created. By looking at different models, I was able to examine how they might fit into the environment of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities that I visited. I also asked participants and interviewees to share their definitions with me. Doing this allowed me to obtain a better understanding of how people viewed these two ideas up close and personal. In addition to focusing on the formation and definition of collectivity and solidarity I attempt to provide insight on how they work in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil that I visited and in other Afro-Ecuadorian communities people told me about.

For Chapter Five, I place a microscope over a theme that is recurrent in Afro-Latin studies in the fifth chapter, and that theme dealt with the word *negro*. In this chapter, I attempt to demonstrate the negative effects of stereotypes and stigmas through the eyes of my participants and their experiences that accompany this word. When I spoke with people about the topic, I was surprised to have felt as much empathy for the hurt and the disappointment that they felt all because of one word. I include a brief comparison of racism and the word “black” in the United States and Ecuador.

I explore the data that was collected from the survey and interviews and try to make sense of it in the sixth chapter, but first I provide a historical account of Afro-Ecuadorian participation and mobilization in Ecuador. I highlight major questions that were asked and answered from the surveys

and interviews. I attempt to highlight certain factors, which I believe impact participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. There were many factors at play, in this survey population, some seemed like they could be related to simple demographics, and others were more complicated.

Chapter Seven focuses on suggestions for the improvement of Afro-Ecuadorian lives in Guayaquil and throughout the republic of Ecuador. I compiled these suggestions based on the information shared with me by my participants and interviewees, but I also based them on my personal experiences living in Ecuador and in the United States. The result was four target areas (positive imagery, economic and educational advancement, increased collectivity, and new negritude) where I believed the greatest change needed to occur in order to change the way non-Afro-Ecuadorians perceived Afro-Ecuadorians and how Afro-Ecuadorians perceived themselves.

The eighth chapter provides a recap of this investigation as well as some ideas for future research. For example, Guayaquil is a very large city, much too large for just one person to take care of alone. One idea is to have a team of researchers, some of them should be locals, so that it will be easier to collect information from areas and people they are familiar with. Other popular areas associated with blackness are Quito, Esmeraldas and the Chota Valley. These should also be areas of micro studies in order to include regional variety, which will match the heterogeneity of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Ecuador.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCHING AFRICAN DESCENDANTS IN LATIN AMERICA

Literature Review

In this section, I present information pertinent to understanding important topics relevant to this research. This dissertation focuses on information pertaining to the factors that promote and/or prohibit participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs and it also focuses on solidarity and collectivity and how they form and operate within Afro-Ecuadorian communities. The topics in this literature review focus on patterns of researching Afro-descendants in Latin American from the past as well as those from the present. Additional topics include race in Latin America, since race is a social construct, it can operate differently in different societies, and it is important to know how and why it operates the way it does in this region. Recognizing Black experience(s) in Latin America can contribute to understanding how Afro-Latinos live their lives and how their societies treat them. I will also focus on types of Afro-descendant mobilization in Andean and Indigenous countries. Afro-Descendants and Indigenous people are commonly compared and contrasted in areas where both reside, but I am also interested in their mobilization and collaboration efforts as they are present in Ecuador. Lastly, I present information on solidarity and collectivity, as I find that they play an important role in Afro-Ecuadorian communities.

Typical Afro-descendant Studies and Their Patterns of Research

Initial anthropological concern for Afro-descendants in the "New World" was primarily focused on finding or revealing traits that Melville Herskovits called *Africanisms*. These *Africanisms* were easily identifiable traits in religious activities, language, family practices and cultural aspects that he believed originated from the "West African-Congo area" (Yelvington 2001, 228). This search

for *Africanisms* is what prompted studies of Afro-descendants for years. Scholars were obsessed with trying to determine how culturally similar afro-descendants were in the western hemisphere. Although we are no longer in search of *Africanisms* within our study populations, we are still very much interested in culture, identity and experience. The ever-present trend to compare and contrast different afro-descendant communities is alive and well. Race and racial identity studies are very prevalent with Afro-Latin America because of miscegenation. Black and white (races) stand on opposite sides of the spectrum practically everywhere, the United States, South African, and in Latin-American countries, but *mestizaje* (racial mixing/ miscegenation) and *blanqueamiento* (whitening) have allowed for more fluidity between the two. In his essay, Yelvington argues that blackness was and still is stigmatized, which contributes to people negating their blackness in order to "escape" that stigma (Yelvington 2001). While I conducted research, I also encountered people who chose to negate their blackness for those exact reasons. I had the chance to speak with people who have struggled and endured stigma because of their blackness, which I share in great detail in Chapter 5.

Another prominent issue in studying people of African descent living in the Americas has circled around the terminology that should be used. Whitten et al. note that the nomenclature *Afro-X* started to gain popularity in Latin America circa 1992 as it stood in opposition to the "Ibero-Latin American ideology that excluded Afro-descendants as well as indigenous people. *Afro-latinoamericano* was a concept that pushed the idea of self-representation and self-identity for black intellectuals," (1995, 298). The *Afro-X* line of terminology also allowed Afro-Latinos to distance themselves from all of the emotional baggage and stigma that the word *negro* carries with it. Even though this terminology is top-down (started with intellectuals and made its way to the common

folk), it has permeated throughout the Ecuadorian society and is a way that many people use to self-identify. This was very evident as I conducted my research and collected data.

Race in Latin America

Many Latin American societies could be broken down in to racialized pyramids where white people are on top, and control the economy, politics and all other aspects of life. Mixed white/indigenous people and mixed white/black people follow, and then indigenous and black people occupied the bottom lower levels of society (Halpern and Twine 2000), see Figure 9. My personal experiences in the field support the idea that this social/racial hierarchy still exists.
In one essay, Tonya Golash-Boza argues that race and color labels are different from each other. Race is used to categorize people who share certain characteristics such as hair texture, facial features, even skin color. However, color labels are just that, they speak specifically to the color of one's skin, (2010). These are important aspects to know when focusing on afro-descendant communities who lean on both terms to describe people they know and see. There are some previous studies on afro-descendants, where scholars note a "mulatto escape hatch," (Nascimento 1980; Andrews 2004), where a person can be born black but move further away from being associated with blackness by becoming wealthy or through intergenerational *blanqueamiento* (whitening). This idea is most commonly associated with Brazil, but the author tested this theory in Peru (Golash-Boza).

Historically speaking, there are instances where children are racially characterized by hyperdescent. In such instances, the more socially accepted parent is considered dominant and that determines the child's race. In the United States, it only applied to mixed-race children of indigenous and white parentage. For mixed-race children with black and white parents, their racial identity is determined by hypodescent. However, in Latin American countries, racially mixed children, although they don't take on the race of the socially dominant parent, as is the case with

hyperdescent, they are not necessarily assigned the socially submissive parent's race, through hypodescent, either. This phenomenon complicates how people racially identify, even in their own households. This is a national phenomenon throughout Ecuador, and it could be a factor prohibiting participation in an Afro-Ecuadorian NGO. If a potential participant does not identify with the members of a group, or if the group members do not accept the potential participant, then they would be less likely to join that organization. Golash-Boza identifies three types of *blanqueamiento* (whitening) (2010). Intergenerational whitening occurs when a black person (most often a woman) and a white person (most often a man) have a child, that child is "whiter" than its black parent (Golash-Boza 2010). That baby will have automatically surpassed the black parent's social rank because that child will be considered whiter than the black parent. In countries like the United States and South Africa, this phenomenon is strange, since there is no "whiter" or "blacker" than statuses for mixed-race children, they are racially labeled as black, or were assigned statuses indicating the "amount of blackness" they possessed (i.e. mulatto, quadroon, octoroon). Unless after generations of racial mixing, the child is so light-skinned that he or she may pass for white.

A social whitening phenomenon occurs when people who are born black or are so phenotypically dark-skinned that they have no societal claims towards whiteness, are considered white or "whiter" because they have amassed enough wealth to move up the social ladder, and away from blackness (Golash-Boza 2010). Cultural whitening is the last phenomenon Golash-Boza describes. This phenomenon is most associated with indigenous people. In this form, whitening occurs through acculturation of the dominant mestizo culture. The more an indigenous person assimilates to Eurocentric characteristics in the way they speak and dress, they become more mestizo (Golash-Boza 2010). The bottom line is, the lighter the children are the closer they get to whiteness.

Afro-Latinos are aware of this phenomenon, as are Afro-Ecuadorians, since as it has been an ingrained aspect of their lives for such a long time.

Mestizaje has its roots as deep as the first moments of colonization, which in the case of Ecuador began as early as 1534 (Crain 1990) and has been one the most momentous manipulations throughout the history of man. *Mestizaje* is a historically embedded ideology of Latin America centered on racial and cultural mixing between early Spanish colonizers, Native Americans, African slaves and then white Europeans. It has been used to deny the possibility of racism but promote ideas of racial democracy because everyone is mixed, but it should be noted that this process produced phenotypically distinct people. *Blanqueamiento* (whitening) is another Latin American ideology that initially focused heavily on phenotype but has evolved to contain and express cultural components (Golash-Boza 2010). *Blanqueamiento* posits that the lighter (whiter) an individual is, the better. Whitening allows for the lightest-skinned or whitest members of society to control and reap the best society has to offer, but simultaneously excludes and negatively impacts phenotypically darker-skinned (black) individuals, essentially making them the undesirables of the society (Nacimento 1980).

Blanqueamiento was supposed to be a sure-fire tool to "correct" the issue of varied phenotypes when in reality it created many more phenotypes, which also gave way to a caste system. In the image that follows it is evident that many racial categories were created, instead of the creation of just one racial category. In Latin America "the color criterion allowed for social mobility," so *blanqueamiento* was deemed as a "non-racist" and "socially democratic" action. Nascimento points out that Latin American "society discriminates the African phenotype," because of what it represents, "a people, their civilization, history and culture" all of which "has been deemed as inferior as a result of white supremacist ideology" (Nascimento 1980, 201).

Blanqueamiento through mestizaje then, can be seen as a "full-fledged manifestation of white supremacy, a tool of oppression, domination and racist genocide," while simultaneously is used as proof for the non-existence of racism, although it is the product of racism from the mestizo elites who indoctrinated it (Nascimento 1980, 201).

Although the nation and exact area we know today as Ecuador didn't exist until 1830, the process of mestizaje was well under way with the segregation of the Spanish criollos (American-born Spaniards) and Spanish-Indigenous mixed mestizos from the Indigenous and Afro-descent groups. The Indigenous and Afro-descent groups were placed at the lower ends of Latin American societies from the start and were expected to be in a position of submission and servitude since they were deemed backwards and uncivilized. It is for that reason, criollos and mestizos had more control over land and other vital resources, which would allow them to maintain power and pass it down to future generations after independence was obtained from Spain.

In the past, many Latin American societies were constructed with racist ideas that stimulated national identities of being either white or mestizo. Hispanic and mestizo people were referred to as "gente de cultura" or cultured people, while blacks and indigenous groups were considered savages and people who had no culture (Crain 1990, 46). In addition to leaving the "less desirable" groups to their own devices through exclusion, ideas of improving the Amerindian and Afro-descendant groups by immigrating more Europeans to the country and by participating in miscegenation became very popular (Crain 1990). The phrase "mejorar la raza," which means, "improve or better the race," is a very common phrase and idea which has persisted in these societies to the present. This phrase is still commonly used by Afro-Ecuadorians and mestizos today. With national ideologies of exclusion based on past beliefs of diluting unwanted characteristics of being non-white or non-

mestizo, in areas like Ecuador, where the Afro-descendant population represented less than 10%, resulted in them being left out of national images and ideologies (Hooker 2005).

It was necessary to create some type of homogeneity and unification once the nation began to progress towards economic development. The only way liberals during the age of Ecuadorian nation building, were going to accomplish such a feat was through the integration and assimilation of the numerous Indigenous populations. The only way that was going to happen was through the process of *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento. Blanqueamiento* additionally called for European immigration to the new nation. This way the Ecuadorian nation would be able to "improve the Indian race," the group which was commonly held as the complete opposite of what was esteemed, for the construction of the Ecuadorian national identity. Indians fit the "primitive contrast for the Ecuadorian subject through a series of oppositions such as Adult/Child, Industrious/Lazy, Catholic/Pagan, Urban/Rural" (Crain 1990, 46). Blacks were not even considered as a factor. Since the beginning blacks were seen as the ultimate Other. They were thought of as incorrigible and left out of the discussion of nation building in Ecuador.

Popular Latin American ideologies like racial democracy, whitening and mestizaje have had serious impacts on afro-descent communities in the past, (Beck et al 2011) and continue to do so today. Racial Democracy is based on an idea of *blanqueamiento* which involved the mixing of white male blood with indigenous and afro-descendant females, in an attempt to: 1- physically whiten or lighten the country's dark or brown-skinned citizens, and 2- culturally whiten their societies as well, because it was believed that it would be the best way to become successful. The multi-ethnic mixtures of groups in Latin American, myths that slavery was "much better" in Latin America due to higher rates of manumission, Catholic religious beliefs, and a curious misinterpretation of owner-slave relationships, legitimated claims of a paternalistic feature of Latin American slavery, which

was absent in the slavery systems of South Africa and the United States (Crain 1990). These were in fact myths, considering the higher mortality rates amongst Latin American slaves, and false hope laws like the Free Womb Law passed in Brazil in 1871 and in other Latin American countries.[2] However, despite these facts, unfortunately many people outside of Latin America began to believe in the hype of Racial Democracy as well.

People were lulled into a false sense of the cessation of national ideologies like mestizaje and whitening which blanketed, the marginalized and 'invisibilized' Afro-Ecuadorians, with the revision of the Ecuadorian Constitution in 1998. Although it officially recognized Ecuador's Black/Afro-descendant communities, those communities still suffered disparities in education, health, economics, housing, racism and racial discrimination.

In light of the historical dynamics through which the use of *mestizaje* had excluded certain members of Latin American society, it had developed and been represented in such a way that fooled many individuals into believing racism was not an issue. Flash forward to the present and now it is popular thought that m*estizaje* had created racial harmony in the form of a racial democracy. But with a closer look it was, and still is, very obvious that the importance of skin color/phenotype based on the social construction of race played a crucial role in the ranking process of the Latin American social ladder. Some scholars have even perceived *mestizaje* as a form of "ethnic lynching," a method of restoring whiteness by bleaching out black people and the serious threat to national identity their existence presented (Rogers 2006).

The following image is a painting depicting the caste system that was used throughout Latin America. This particular painting is from colonial Mexico. Each square represents a different "racial combination." When the Spanish were in control, they wanted to keep that power in Spanish hands,

[2] Enacted in 1871 in Brazil, stated that children born to slaves would be free. It was a law that was difficult to enforce, and true/legal emancipation did not occur in Brail until 1888.

so forming a caste system like this was one way to keep certain groups of people out of important Spanish colonial positions. The Spanish believed that people's character and quality varied depending on their birth, color, race and ethnicity. This system was tied to economics and taxation; it even determined one's importance in society, (Estes 2013). The Spanish recognized four central or "base" races in their colonies: *peninsulares*, people who were born in Spain; *criollos*, people of Spanish descent who were born in the "New World;" *indios*, people of Amerindian descent from the Americas and *negros,* the enslaved people of African descent and their progeny (Estes 2013). These images speak volumes to the perception of race in Spanish colonies; they also provide insight on the early inner-workings of the Latin American society many Afro-Latinos face today. For example, comparing the top-left corner image with the bottom-right corner image, it is easy to note the contrasting lifestyles and occupations between those families. One family is "whiter," well-dressed, and appears to be more noble or "classy." The other family is darker-skinned, is shabbily-dressed, don't have shoes for their feet, and clearly of the working/domestic class.

Figure 9. *Cuadro de las Castas Coloniales.* Museo Nacional del Virreinato Mexico (Estes 2013).

On top of rendering Afro-descents marginalized and invisible with deplorable health, education and economic disparities, in comparison to the mestizo population, *mestizaje* has complicated their struggle to call attention to the racist, prejudice and discriminatory instances they have had to deal with since before the inception of the Latin American republics. Afro-descendants, who attempted to "fight back" against the institution of *mestizaje*, have to contend against accusations of "reverse racism," and being called racists for signaling racism and/or racist acts. In a society where Afro-descendants have never had and still do not have any control over the ruling class, these claims of "reverse racism" serve as another method of keeping Afro-descendants in "their place" on the bottom rung of Latin American society.

Alongside *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento,* the Catholic Church also had a huge influence on the lives of afro-descendants during the colonial period. And again, like *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento*, Catholicism has continued to be a source of unrest and trauma for afro-descendants in Latin America today, especially for women. The image and concept of the Virgin Mary, "a woman of exceptional white beauty," was used as the ideal woman of the new Christian empire. In order materialize the patriarchal idealization of the women of the empire, "Mary had to be sober, prudent, and dull, in order to be viewed as a transcendent, heavenly woman" (Salinas 1992, 526). Of course, this idea was only intended for white women so on the opposite side of the ideal perfect white woman was the black woman. Black women were feared and portrayed as extremely dangerous and erotic, (Salinas 1992).

The role of race and skin color in this study is important because it can be used to group individuals together, or to separate them. I discuss the potential problems that could arise from the complexity of miscegenation in Latin America. Since racism and racial discrimination are primarily executed by non-black or non-afro members of Latin America's societies, they in turn hold the

power to decide how close or far away an individual or group of individuals are from blackness. The power these individuals yield over afro-descendants in Latin America directly determines what types of experiences Afro-Latinos will encounter. On multiple occasions, I heard Afro-Ecuadorians argue that there was disunion within their communities. Perhaps the option to negate one's blackness in favor of anything else could be impacting Afro-Ecuadorian communities in a negative way. Afro-descendants in the United States were not warranted such flexibility in their society, unless they were light-skinned enough and had ambiguous features, which made it difficult to acknowledge their African ancestry.

Black Experience(s) in Latin America

Afro-descendants have always had to fight for recognition in Latin America, even though there are more Afro-descendants than indigenous people (Halpern and Twine 2000). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had a long history of neglecting Afro-descendants but supporting indigenous people. It could be argued that since colonial times, after the "indian" was viewed as "savage," that he quickly transitioned into the role of being the "helpless victim," who needed to be helped and taken care of, they were worth being rescued and "saved." Batholomé de las Casas, a 16th century priest, petitioned the Spanish crown to stop abusing the Indians in the colonies, and suggested using African labor would be better (Rivera Pagán, 2006). Although he eventually changed his stance on African enslavement too, the seeds had been sown to treat indigenous people better since they were capable of being saved (Rivera Pagán, 2006). Halpern and Twine argue that the neglect from NGOs (both national and international), have directly or perhaps indirectly played a role in the political, economic, and geographic erasures that have plagued Afro-descendants since European colonization (2000).

Being black in Latin America carries a stigma, and the word black, "*negro*" has always carried a negative connotation for afro-descendants. Today the word "*negro"* and its diminutive term "*negrito"* (little black) are considered pejorative when used inappropriately. One participant highlighted this phenomenon when he told me that sometimes mestizo (non-black) people would try to "*blackarme,*" which, when translated means "blacken me, or treat me like a black person" but is interpreted as meaning "to make one feel as though he is less than the other person." This is a newer term that I believe is part "Spanglish" but it has roots. The older and perhaps more common term is "*negrar"* which, when translated means "making one black," but literally means "to treat someone like a slave/black." Norman Whitten has published research on this phenomenon (Whitten et. al 1995). During the slave era (1500s-1800s) in Latin America black was synonymous with slave; the two terms were interchangeable. I've heard Mexicans say "*no me niegres*" or don't treat me like a slave/black [person], when talking about their workload and can be interpreted as "stop overworking me; you've given me too much work; or you are treating me like a slave/black [person]". After more than four hundred years of negative connotations associated with the word "*negro,*" and the weight of the stigma it carries, it is understandable why the constitutional revision meant so much for Afro-Ecuadorians.

Unlike Afro-Ecuadorians, African-Americans had a Black Pride movement that still impacts black people today. It flipped the negative associations with the word *black* upside down. Many black people in the U.S. embraced their hair, dress, skin-tone and other physical attributes and characteristics associated with blackness because of that movement. As a black woman researching Afro-Ecuadorians in Ecuador, many times I had to remember that to some people the word black was extremely offensive and labeling them black would make some people upset. For that reason, when I refer to afro-Ecuadorians I use these terms: *afro-descendants, afro-descendent, Afro-*

Ecuadorian/afroecuatoriano and Afro-Guayaquilan/afroguayaquileño to show respect for my participants, unless the participant uses other terminology. The term *black* is used when I am referring to myself or if other scholars used it to describe Afro-Latinos.

In addition to the stigma associated with blackness, being black in Latin America comes with a host of issues, misfortunes and disparities. Historically, and arguably now, whiter countries like the United States and other European countries were perceived as more superior countries, because racial mixing occurred at lower levels. The effects of Social Darwinism had very negative impacts for non-European countries throughout Latin America. In some countries such as Colombia and Argentina, they were prompted to develop an international image as being devoid of inferiors; promote European immigration in order to improve ethnic conditions "but forbid organic and racial elements that would not be suitable for Colombian-nation building and the mono-ethnic races of Colombia;" give incentives for white Colombians to more indigenous regions with the intentions of "whitening" those areas, (Arocha 1998, 71). Afro-Colombians, like Afro-Ecuadorians were disregarded by many and used as scapegoats to place the blame for these two countries "weakness" in terms of their international ranking with counties like the United States and other Western European countries. On the other hand, countries like Argentina, Chile and Uruguay who had apparently resolved their Afro-descendant "problem" by making it invisible or undetectable, were considered successful South American countries (Arocha 1998). The following are lyrics to a song taught to school-aged children in Quito, which depicts sentiment towards Afro-Ecuadorians.

¿Quién quiere al hombre negro?	*Who wants the black man?*
¡Nadie!	*No one!*
¿Por qué?	*Why?*

¡Porque es negro!	*Because he is black!*
¿Qué come?	*What does he eat?*
¡Carne!	*Meat!*
¿Qué bebe?	*What does he drink?*
¡Sangre!	*Blood!*

-(Beck et al 2011, 104).

Even with songs like this one, and the plethora of other negative stereotypes Afro-Ecuadorians have been subjected to, there was a period of time after the 1950's where Ecuadorian intellectuals argued that racism and racial discrimination was non-existent and therefore unimportant (Beck et al. 2011).

Comparing the racism and discrimination that was on display in countries like the United States and South Africa, where black people were segregated, hosed and beat down openly in the streets, it was clear that Afro-Ecuadorians were not having similar experiences (or that abuse was not videoed and broadcasted around the world). This resulted in claims of racism and racial discrimination being ignored and overlooked. It also caused Afro-Ecuadorians who called out their oppressors to be labeled as *reverse racists*. The impact of years of dismissing racism and racial discrimination, just because it was not manifested in the same manner, caused many Afro-Ecuadorians to not be taken seriously, and it made some people slow to realize that the stereotypes hurled at them were actually racist. Keeping Afro-Ecuadorians in a constant state of self-doubt, and out of positions of power stunted their ability to develop a strong racial consciousness until the late 1970s when they started to mobilize.

In *Orpheus and Power*, Michael Hanchard describes the formation of various levels or "modes of racial consciousness" based on "power relations between racial groups." He argues that a

developed racial consciousness within members of the same group should result in "individual or collective action that will counterbalance, transpose, or transform situations of racial asymmetry," such as racism and discrimination (Hanchard 1994). It is clear that many Afro-Ecuadorians have achieved levels of "racial consciousness" because of the existence and continued formation of Afro-Ecuadorian organizations, but whether or not the modes of racial consciousness have elevated to a point that Afro-Ecuadorians can claim a successful social movement is still debatable.

Ecuador's largest Afro-descendant population was historically located in the province of Esmeraldas, which is located on the Pacific northwestern coast. Other significant populations were located in the Chota Valley area, which straddles the Ibambura and Carchi provinces. San Lorenzo is a predominately Afro-Ecuadorian city in Esmeraldas province. Even though this was the case, Afro-Ecuadorians did not hold administrative positions or lead the commercial centers there in the past (Whitten 1974). Luckily some of these aspects have actually begun to change. While I conducted field research in 2012, I saw Afro-Ecuadorian business owners in both San Lorenzo and the city of Esmeraldas. I also had the opportunity to speak with the mayor of Esmeraldas, Ernesto Estupiñan Quinterno, an Afro-Ecuadorian man.

In an article on Afro-Ecuadorian beauty pageants, Jean Rahier addresses how racism has played a role in every aspect of life in Ecuadorian society (Rahier 1999). He highlights that fact that in one of the blackest provinces (Esmeraldas), white and white mestiza women had been winning local beauty pageants since 1922 until the first Afro-Ecuadorian woman won in 1997. An interesting fact about this study is the vocabulary that was used to distinguish white and white-mestiza and white-mulata women from black women. The former were referred to as *damas* or *señoras* (they translate to ladies in English), the latter was referred to as *mujeres* (which translates to women). Rahier breaks down the importance of the racial/spatial order in Ecuador with this article. Here he

notes the differences between the two, what is expected of them, and how society believes men are "allowed" to treat them.

> *Señoras* were white, white-mestizo, or white-mulata, she will be educated and espouse all signs of "social respectability," she will be viewed as being dedicated to having children and will not be associated –in male conversations- with sexual pleasure; her body will be well covered and never exposed in the public space; she will not be employed and will have at least one maid to take care of her house; she will attend social events in the evening, often accompanied by her husband, (Rahier 1999, 109).

Although these definitions were written to describe an Esmeraldan society, I would argue that these ideas are commonplace throughout all of Ecuador and perhaps in other countries as well, included those outside of Latin America as well. White(ish) women have always been placed on very high pedestals, meant to be protected and revered. Black women were never afforded such treatment. Rahier states that,

> *Mujeres* will be black or dark-skinned; she will be thought of as being easy sexual access to men; she will be uncovering her body in public spaces in "indecent ways;" she will eventually have sets of children by different men; she will be uneducated and be employed as a maid or a cook; her mannerisms will be said to be "unrefined;" her body shape will be voluptuous, almost conceived of being naturally obscene or vulgar; she will be the occasional lover of white, white-mestizo or white-mulato married men; who will comment with loquacity in male gatherings on "black women's sexual prowess" and the curves of their body parts with expressions such as "*una Buena negra"* (a good black women), *"una negra caliente"* (a hot black

> woman) or even by referring to specific body parts more explicitly, (Rahier 1999, 109).

These descriptions provide stark contrasts for white and black women. They also highlight the difficulty black women must have in gaining respect and being taken seriously, and why they were never permitted to participate in such a pageant. In Esmeraldas, the *Negra Linda* (Nice black girl) contest was reserved for Afro-Ecuadorian women. Seems like a case of "Separate but Equal" segregation, even though Ecuador has never passed any laws promoting segregation. Rahier highlights how the Afro-Ecuadorian woman who won, J. Hurtado, completely changed her natural looks after winning the completion. She straightened her hair and used contacts to change her eye color to appear more European (acceptable); and these are aspects of cultural acculturation (Goalsh-Boza 2010).

This study is informative about the perceptions of black women and others in Ecuadorian society. All the negative stereotypes have been bored into the thoughts and minds of both afro and non-Afro-Ecuadorians. How much more difficult would it be to build up one's self-esteem and determine one's worth under these circumstances? Unfortunately, the hyper-sexualization of Afro-descendant women and the idealization of white women are not new phenomenon, as they have been long-standing in many societies.

Rahier notes how Afro-Ecuadorians "have become an integral part of the landscape in two major cities, Quito and Guayaquil," and it may seem that this fact has threatened some people (1998, 421). In these cities, Afro-Ecuadorian women are employed as "nannies, cooks, maids, factory workers, and prostitutes" and Afro-Ecuadorian men work as "guardians, drivers, gardeners, construction workers, factory workers, traveling salesmen, shoe cleaners, and other temporary work," I have seen men selling candies, and natural beverages on street corners.

Rahier described another pageant contest on a larger scale when he investigated the election of Monica Chalá as Miss Ecuador in 1995 (Rahier 1998). He argues that contrary to what some might believe, her election did not mean that racism in Ecuador was over, or that Afro-Ecuadorians had finally been invited to the table, or that people in Ecuador were finally willing to support that black was beautiful, but her election had highlighted the fact that, "postmodern Ecuadorian society was heavily influenced by transnational ideas from North America and Western European countries," (Rahier 1998, 426). At the time of her election, blackness was "*de moda*" or in style, and it was fashionable to commodify "pretty" (still conforming to a Europeanized standard of beauty, being tall and thin) black girls in order to proclaim an international standard of beauty that included racial diversity. Rahier argues that her election was made possible, in part, because of international media that portrayed black people, but especially black women, in such a way that it pushed against ideas that black women could only be viewed as they had been before in Ecuadorian society.

This case study of Miss Ecuador 1995 proves that blackness and black culture can and will be celebrated when it is convenient. When countries want to show off how diverse they are, they look to their minority communities and "try to show them off." For example, when I conducted field research in 2012 an Afro-Ecuadorian dance troop from Ibarra was contacted to perform traditional *Marimba* and *Bobma* dances in a mestizo-indigenous town's parade where there was no black presence. In fact, the other black person I saw while I accompanied them was some mestizo man who had painted his arms, legs and face black. Rahier mentioned that some people argued that Chalá won the election because the Miss Universe competition was going to be held in South Africa that year, and it might increase Ecuador's chance to win, if they sent a black candidate (Rahier 1998.)

There have been many scholars that have proven time and time again that racism and racial discrimination has always existed in Ecuadorian society (Beck et al. 2012, De la Torre 2002, Rahier

1998, Whitten and Quiroga 1998). I have also experienced and witnessed this phenomenon while I lived and conducted research in Ecuador. The simple fact that phrases like, "*tratado como negro,"* (treated like a black [person]) and "*no me negree*," (don't treat me like a *nigger*) are commonly shared and exchanged by people who are not black, ought to be enough to persuade someone of the truth (Beck et al 2012, 105). I assume the author's word choice in the last translation was selected to express the sting and disrespect that such a phrase carries, since there is not a direct translation for the *n-word* in Spanish. Media representations of Afro-Ecuadorians are equally unflattering. In popular magazines like *Vistazo*, Afro-Ecuadorians were frequently referred to as "dangerous criminals," and oddly enough, the only time race was mentioned in a crime was if the perpetuator was black and the victim was not black (Beck et al 2012, 105).

Beck et al. highlight the fact that even though all Ecuadorians recognize racial and ethnic-based categories because they have used them to categorize people as *blanco, blanco-mestizo, mestizo, negro, mulato, indio* and *indigena*, which are all products of racism (2012). However, they argue that in light of the aforementioned, many Ecuadorians did not possess *racism awareness* where it is difficult for them to recognize racism and prejudicial practices. The authors conducted a study in Quito with Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian leaders. The results from the study highlighted the fact that elite/educated members of the Afro-Ecuadorian community did in fact possess racial awareness. The Indigenous leaders did not use terms like racism, discrimination, or prejudice unless the interviewer used them first. The Indigenous leaders focused on topics concerning "oppression, economic exploitation, poverty, civil rights, access to credit, educational opportunities and political reform," (Beck et. al 2012, 107). Comparing the two groups, it seems as though Indigenous leaders did not have racial awareness.

The results made the scholars question whether or not common Afro-Ecuadorians who were not as educated and non-activist indigenous people would also lack racial awareness (Beck et. al 2012). Analyzing their questions and comparing them to what I experienced in the field, the common trend seems to point in favor of people not possessing racial awareness until they have learned about it, so it is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. If people have been taught over and over again that being racially profiled or discriminated against is "just the way it is," then it makes it all the more difficult to realize that there is a systemic issue at play. It is clear that the Indigenous leaders realized that something was wrong, but they were able to articulate those issues without referring to terminology related to race of racism. This lack or dismissal of racial awareness may be a reason why indigenous groups seldom use "race talk" when they petition the government.

Blacks and Indians

Historically, Afro-Latinos have been subject to invisibility in the nation building of many Latin American countries. Invisibility of the Afro-descendant in the construction of Ecuadorian national history was very common, so naturally, "Ecuadorian national identity was modeled according to European models," (Crain 1990, 46). Both Indigenous and Afro-descendant groups suffered exclusion during the construction of the nation, and the repercussions of those decisions continue to have negative impacts on both communities today. Crain's article depicts the exclusion, yet the eventual inclusion of the indigenous peoples of Ecuador. It highlights that evolution of the "Indian" from peasants and wards of the state to "national treasures." Although this text focuses on the path towards inclusion for Ecuador's indigenous, the exclusion of Afro-Ecuadorians was noticeable and demonstrated a reflective aspect of Ecuadorian society, where Afro exclusion was very popular. Historically, both afro-descendants and indigenous people were viewed as the "savage other," but indigenous people turned out to be more incorporable than the Afro-descendants (Crain

1990, 46). In the early 1900's the perception of Ecuador's indigenous people began to change, they switched from being categorized as incorrigible, to manageable and capable of assimilation. For Afro-Ecuadorians, their status never changed, and they were perceived as being inferior and deserving of remaining servile. They were blamed for the backwardness of their nations (Arocha 1998).

From the inception of the Colombian nation, the main premise of nation building was mono-ethnic, and Afro-descendants were not included. There were obvious notions of a dichotomy, "us vs. them," where both afro-descendants and the indigenous were at odds. However, as time went by, indigenous people were granted inclusion, while afro-descendants continued to be stereotyped as, "lazy, promiscuous, strong, not affected by pain, and not very intelligent," (Arocha 1998, 71). As the nation developed, the government neglected the infrastructure, education, health and legal services where most Afro-Colombians resided, which was very parallel to the treatment Afro-Ecuadorians received from their government.

In one essay, Arocha details the indigenous/Afro-Colombian collaboration in the Baudó region (1998). This region is isolated from urban metropolises, and these two communities have an established relationship, which began in the 1700s. Scholars such as Juliet Hooker have focused on indigenous inclusion and black exclusion across Latin America (Hooker 2005, Wade 1995). Others like Halpern and Twine have focused on black/indigenous collaborations in Ecuador. For Afro-descendants in Latin America, mobilizing for collective rights in the same ways as indigenous groups had proved to be beneficial.

Institutions like the Colombian Institute of Anthropology made it difficult for Afro-Colombian residents in the coastal areas of the Pacific to claim any aspects of indigeneity or as a separate ethnic group. Law 70 was ratified on August 27, 1993, and recognized that certain black

communities, in specific areas, could indeed be set apart as different ethnic groups, and allowed for the titling of certain collective land rights to whole black communities in specific areas of the Pacific Basin and other areas where black communities live on "rural riverine public lands," (Wade 1995, 349). In addition to the aforementioned, Law 70 was designed to improve education, access to credit, and two representative slots for congress. Collective right gains for these specific communities of Afro-Colombians were accepted because of the similarities they expressed which were tied to the experiences of the indigenous: 1. "*Certain* Afro-Colombians possessed their own culture, shared a common history, traditions and customs, that revealed and conserved a consciousness of identity which distinguishes them from other ethnic groups; 2. The land was communally occupied and classified as ancestral and/or a historic settlement; 3. There was traditional production practices or specified activities used customarily; 4. The lands were located in the Pacific Region (Wade 1995, 349).

Afro-Ecuadorians have been a presence in the northwestern area of Esmeraldas province before the inception of the state. Many Afro-Ecuadorian leaders challenged the government using similar arguments as The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and other indigenous groups. CONAIE challenged the government for land rights and cultural autonomy. In the past, Indigenous claims for land rights received international attention because they were able to link their arguments of being better suited to take care of the land, with international environmental movements. Linking their movement with international movements caused both humanitarian and international NGOs to take interest in Ecuador's indigenous struggle.

Afro-Ecuadorians in this area partnered with Carchi Indians to fight for land in the coastal plains in San Lorenzo, that they both occupy. In the struggle for land rights with the Ecuadorian government, both Afro-Ecuadorians and indigenous people relied on identity as a component of

cultural autonomy. The indigenous groups leaned on the idea of "indigenous self-determination," which consisted not only of collective land rights and bilingual education, but it also focused on "political issues, such as the right to Indian cultural identity, and the right to develop economically according to indian values and beliefs," (Halpern and Twine 2000, 25). These ideas really appealed to certain international NGOs as well as scholars who focused on issues concerning cultural diversity, cultural preservation, and identity and minority studies.

According to Halpern and Twine, Afro-Ecuadorians drew from a Haitian concept of blackness through certain aspects of *negritude* for their identity component. However, this concept directly challenged the traditional Ecuadorian ideology of *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento* because it stressed the positive features and aspects of people labeled black or who self-identified as black (2000). This concept clashed greatly with those traditional ideologies and the past stereotypes that had been pushed on Afro-Ecuadorian people before the creation of the state. The magnitude of these identities is illustrated in the 1998 Constitution because it was the very first revision in which Ecuador is no longer identifies as a mono-ethnic mestizo only nation. In doing so, it acknowledged the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian populations as part of the country, as well as their collective land rights.

Taking this fact into consideration, it is interesting to note that even though both indigenous groups and Afro-Ecuadorian people share many commonalities in terms of indigeneity and land rights, they are treated very differently. Both the Ecuadorian state and scholars are guilty of perpetuating differentiated treatment between the two. The state practices this differentiation by limiting Afro-Ecuadorian land rights and cultural autonomy to very specific Afro-Ecuadorian communities where "indigenous rights" are applicable. Although the constitution does not explicitly state where or which Afro-Ecuadorians can claim those rights, it is obvious that Afro-Ecuadorians

living in large urban metropolises would not be considered. Collective land rights are usually reserved for areas that are not heavily populated, are isolated and are very rural. Scholars have contributed to the differentiation in treatment for Afro-Ecuadorians and indigenous people too. They have situated studies on Afro-descendants in terms of racism and race relations, but the same studies on indigenous groups have been situated in terms of ethnicity and ethnic groups. Additionally, both national and international scholars have spent more time on indigenous people turning their struggles into "international movements for social justice and human rights," than Afro-Latino people (Halpern and Twine 2000, 29).

These authors argue that NGOs could play a huge role in supporting human rights initiatives for Afro-Latino communities, but it will be imperative that "expanding definitions of indigenous to include people of African descent, who have a long and documented historical presence," (Halpern and Twine 2000, 29-30). I share part of their opinion, NGOs could play a huge role in supporting humans rights initiatives for Afro-descendants in Latin America, but I do not think that this support has to come from Afro-descendants being viewed through an "indigenous lens" and it seems extremely problematic. There are many Afro-descendants will never meet such criteria, what good would an "indigenous lens" be for them?

Juliet Hooker has conducted research focused on the causes of the disparities which have occurred in collective rights granted to indigenous and Afro-Latino groups throughout Latin America. She argues that certain collective rights are granted based on possessing a specific group identity, defined in terms of being ethnic or cultural (Hooker 2005). First of all, the granting of collective rights was made possible through multicultural citizenship reforms throughout Latin America which included, "formal recognition of the multicultural nature of national societies and of specific ethnic/racial subgroups, recognition of indigenous customary law as official public law,

collective property rights (especially land), official status for minority languages in predominately minority regions, and guarantees of bilingual education (Hooker 2005, 285).

According to her research, there were fifteen countries that implemented some type of multicultural citizenship reform, but only Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua extended some collective rights to Afro-Latinos. However, only the Central American countries of Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala granted the exact collective rights to indigenous communities and Afro-descendant communities. The other countries mentioned did grant Afro-descendants collective rights, but not at the same rate that they granted indigenous communities (Hooker 2005). Both indigenous and afro-descendant people have experienced noticeable disparities in the areas of poverty, lack of access to basic social services, such as education, health and unemployment, and discrimination. Since both groups have struggles with racial discrimination throughout history, Hooker questions why some of these multicultural citizenship reforms support indigenous communities at a higher rate than afro-descendant communities, and why have Afro-descendant communities not been as successful in winning collective rights as indigenous groups (Hooker 2005)?

These disparities, along with previous studies, hint towards the possibility that people must feel more sympathy for indigenous communities than for afro-descendant ones (Crain 1990, Arocha 1998, Halpern and Twine 2012). Hooker highlights another possibility; indigenous groups possess a "distinct cultural identity," which has contributed to the tendency of their being granted collective rights, (Hooker 2005, 291). She also posits that the way each group was racialized is a big factor. The different racialization allowed for the inclusion of indigenous groups into most Latin American societies before Afro-descendants were. In some Latin American countries, "indigenous people occupy a certain place in the national symbolic universe as ancestral contributors to the new, hybrid

mestizo nation and culture, even if they are seen as marginal and traditional in the present (Hooker 2005, 301). Afro-Latinos have received opposite treatment, as they "have been rendered invisible in many Latin American national narratives of mestizaje, and their place in the national political community is therefore more ambiguous," (Hooker 2005, 301). For these reasons, Afro-Latinos have not been considered as a distinct group to the same extent as indigenous people. Apparently, a popular thought is that Afro-Latinos suffered more from acculturation than indigenous people did, which caused them (Afro-Latinos) to adopt more national mestizo culture, than hold on to their own culture(s) (Hooker 2005).

Figure 10. Walking to the Metrovia from Mecardo Caraguay. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

These popular ideas about Afro-Latinos must have contributed to the difficulty they have had in petitioning for collective rights as indigenous groups. This phenomenon also explains why collective rights have been granted to certain Afro-Latino populations who have traditionally lived in rural areas away from urban metropolises. One argument must be that acculturation takes place at a faster rate in the city, than in the countryside. Hooker notes that, "Afro-Latinos have not been thought of as a distinct group in the same way as the indigenous (because they are not seen as possessing cultural or ethnic difference, only racial difference), so they are seen as less deserving of collective rights (Hooker 2005, 302).

Hooker mentions that both groups were racialized differently, so the granting of collective rights must also be connected to slavery and the treatment of those enslaved throughout history. During the colonial period through to the modern times after independence, elite members of these Latin American societies have decided that Afro-descendants were soulless, incompetent, dumb, and cultureless, regardless of the fact that this line of thinking has been proven wrong time and time again. We can still see the negative trickle-down effects of slavery's legacy on the descendants of the enslaved today. However, it is interesting to note that in communities where Afro-Latinos were granted the same rights as indigenous communities, the Afro-Latinos had to push their blackness aside in order to claim a type of indigeneity. It is almost as if these collective rights granting governments reward Afro-Latino communities for not claiming their blackness.

Arguably, Afro-descendants have been just as victimized, if not more, as indigenous people living in the Americas. Both have suffered through countless cases of exploitation during colonization and throughout the history afterwards. So, I wonder why it is so difficult for people to make the switch? Is it because of the simple fact that some(one) country would not only have to acknowledge that plethora of unfortunate events plagued these groups of people, but that they would

also need to take the blame, accept accountability and be responsible for the past? Maybe another reason why indigenous groups have been granted certain rights more often than Afro-descendants, stems from the fact that they are not black. The ingrained effects of racism and racial discrimination are so far-reaching that the ramifications of their institutionalization have made their removal too difficult. For example, if the foundation of a building is damaged, it had to be rebuilt, re-established so that it is strong enough to function properly. How possible is it really, to "rebuild" a society so that it can have a clean slate and or a fresh start? It does not seem like any society is ready to take on that level of a challenge.

Afro-Descendant Participation in Latin America

Peter Wade has argued that centuries of racial mixing does not make ethnic mobilization impossible, even though it has been argued that racial mixing has created confusion of accessing who belongs where, especially in peripheral areas associated with blackness (Wade 1995; 2006). However, given the experiences of Afro-descendant communities in urban areas where racial mixing and acculturation is more frequent, the opposite might be true. Although afro-descendant mobilization does occur in cities and more urban areas, many of the demands are different (i.e. people are not organizing over land rights) and attempts of arguing for different ethnic statuses are quickly dismissed. Additionally, people in these metropolises have joined together to combat issues related to racism and racial discrimination.

Colombia has one of the largest afro-descendant populations in South America. It is second only to Brazil and is before Venezuela. Colombia shares a southern border with Ecuador. Peter Wade argues that Afro-Colombians were able to draw from national indigenous mobilization, international civil rights and Black power movements from the United States as well as various African countries' liberations, which were inspired by negritude (1995). He also noted that

mobilizing under a pro-black platform was problematic in a country where nationalistic pride is extremely ingrained. This is relevant to my research because Ecuador has the fourth largest Afro-descendant population in South America. In order to gain land rights, arguing certain indigeniety and guerilla warfare helped many minority populations in Colombia, but was not as successful as successful Ecuador. However, the establishment of and collaboration with sister and parent organizations like *Cimarron* and Coordinator of Black Communities did help mobilization efforts (Wade 1995).

Sara Busdiecker has conducted research on Afro-Bolivian mobilization and has recognized that they have been able to mobilize based on their Afro-Bolivian identity (Busdiecker 2009). As more members of the Afro-Bolivian population from the Yungas regions began to migrate to more urban areas like La Paz, they looked for each other. Their ability to reunite was based on a need that Afro-Bolivians had to reconnect with people who they identified with, while they lived surrounded by others. Busdiecker identified that a great part of this Afro-Bolivian identity was intertwined with culture and tradition in the form of song and dance called *Saya* (Busdiecker 2009).

The unification of Afro-Bolivians through *Saya*, eventually led to the creation of the *Movimiento Cultural Saya AfroBoliviana* (Afro-Bolivian Saya Cultural Movement) in 1988. This organization was groundbreaking, being centered on an Afro-Bolivian identity; it was the first of its kind and still exists today (Busdiecker 2009). Busdiecker explains that the organization's initial purpose was to "meet the needs of diverse and growing numbers of Afro-Bolivians dispersed outside of the rural region of their historical concentration," (2009, 124).

Similar to what has happened in Ecuador, the formation of many new groups has been established, not because of different political agendas or varying ideas for mobilizing, but because of *protagonismo*. *Protagonismo* was defined as relating to leaders whom tried to "monopolize power,

attention, and resources, and were trying to be spokepersons or the main attraction of the group," so people left to form their own groups in order to escape the drama (Busdiecker 2009, 124). I listened to various Afro-Ecuadorians describe similar behavior in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs but they used a different word, *egoismo*, and they explained how *egoismo* was also a hindering factor for participation with Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. Both *protagonismo* and *egoism* seem to be heavily "me-focused," where attention is mostly concerned with an individual and their agenda instead of the needs and agenda of the group.

In this essay, Busdiecker defines social movement as, "a type of collective interest intended to modify the established social order or defend some type of collective interest through organized public actions," (2009, 125). Afro-Bolivians used *Saya* to promote unity and pride in Afro-Bolivian communities, as well as gain visibility and respect in a country where they had been invisibilized and disrespected. Another important organization that Busdiecker mentions is *Fundación de Afrodescendientes Pedro Andaverez Peralta* aka *Fund Afro* (Pedro Andaverez Peralta Afro-descendant Foundation,) which focuses on collecting oral histories from Afro-Bolivian elders in the Yungas region, and then sharing those histories with everyone (Busdiecker 2009). The founder, Juan Angola Maconde, does not consider himself to be an activist, but his work is extremely important as it contributes to the inclusion of Afro-Bolivians into Bolivian society and history. His work will reincorporate the lives and lived experiences of Afro-Bolivians into Bolivia's history in areas and eras where they have been silenced and unrecognized. Busdiecker's study on Afro-Bolivian mobilization is important and informative as it provides information and examples about the different manifestations of Afro-Latino participation. With this study, it is evident that not all Afro-descendants have been completely acculturated into dominant mestizo or indigenous Latin American societies.

Multiculturalist Ecuador has created access to state resources in the form of salaried representatives for the Afro-Ecuadorian community for the state. People lobbying for these salaried positions don't have as much trust or support from others in Afro-Ecuadorian communities. Carlos de la Torre defines corporatism as "the state's ability to create interest groups, regulate their numbers and provide the appearance of having a quasi-representational monopoly with special privileges, and in order for organizations to keep getting those privileges they have to allow the state the right to monitor what goes on in the organization" (in Rahier 2012, 206). This corporatism can be problematic because "in corporatism, the state channels demands for reform into institutionalized spaces of negotiation in order to defuse and manage social protest" (Rahier 2012, 206-207). Corporatism creates a facade that the government cares and wants to help, because it throws resources at communities in need, but in reality, it strips power away from the communities' ability to protest, and only supports communities and leaders who "play nice" and do not "rock the boat" or cause a scene. Additionally, movement leaders usually become state employees (Rahier 2012). There were many Afro-Ecuadorians who made claims that their state was indeed guilty of practicing these tactics. Whenever a leader seemed to be rising in the ranks of Afro-Ecuadorian mobilization and gained "too much" popularity, he or she gets offered a great-paying salaried job as a representative, in an area that is far away from their home base. If the leader accepts the job, which happens, whatever momentum they built up with the community is lost, or greatly retarded.

Studies on Afro-Ecuadorian mobilization have viewed the movement in three different perspectives. The first is based on the North American theory of resource mobilization (TRM), "this perspective emphasizes the corporate character of the Afro-Ecuadorian movement and reduces it to interest groups propelled by the state, the church and international bodies," (Anton Sanchez 2009, 37). Another is based on European theories of new social movements. This perspective, "presents

the movement as a form of alternative modernity that privileges Afrocentrism and the struggle against racism," it also pushes for the advancement of a "more inclusive pluralistic and democratic national body," (Anton Sanchez 2009, 37). Anton suggests that Afro-descendant mobilization should be "read within an extensive period of resistance," where afro-descendants have never stopped mobilizing (2009, 38).

This is a valid point, taking into consideration the fact that Afro-descendants fought against the system during the colonial period and slavery, where they escaped slavery and created autonomous Afro-descendant communities such as *palenques* and *quilombos* (Anton Sanchez 2009). Many Latin American countries were able to gain independence through the assistance of enslaved and free Afro-descendants who fought in the battles against the Spanish crown. Then, once their countries were independent, Afro-descendants had to "fight for citizenship in the context of scientific racism and the implementation of mestizaje as the dominant ideology of exclusion," (Anton Sanchez 2009, 38). These perspectives highlight the fact that many Afro-descendant social movements are grounded in ethnic and racial identity and focus on fighting racism, racial discrimination and economic inequality.

The Institute for Afro-Ecuadorian Development and Thought (IPEDA) was an NGO that created the document "The Ecuador We Envision and Want as Afro-Ecuadorians," for the constituent assembly during the revision of the 2007 constitution. It proposed that, "state political reform must be oriented towards strengthening inclusive and intercultural democracy towards consolidating a multi-ethnic and plurinational nation," (Anton Sanchez 2009, 39).

Anton Sanchez's article is very informative about how people, outside the realm of Afro-descendant mobilization, view the efforts of Afro-descendant communities as they have fought for inclusion, equality and against racism and racial discrimination. Afro-Ecuadorians continue to fight

for their rights as citizens and continue to denounce racism and racial discrimination. Anton Sanchez describes three different perspectives on the analysis of the Afro-Ecuadorian movement, the perspective that seems most in-line with what I have observed is the one based on TRM. There are many organizations that work independently and do not collaborate together. Even though all of these organizations are not corporatist, the corporatist nature of many organizations has negatively impacted the progression of the movement into the next phase (whatever that phase may be).

Solidarity and Collectivity Defined and Constructed

The Oxford dictionary defines solidarity as, "*unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group."* Merriam-Webster defines collectivity as, "*the quality or state of being collective; a collective whole: the people as a body"* and collective has many definitions, but here are the most relevant to this project, "*3a: of, relating to, or being a group of individuals; b: involving all members of a group as distinct as from its individuals*." These are all great definitions for these terms, but how do people form solidarity and collectivity?

In his essay on modernity and collective identities, Shmuel Eisenstadt argues against the once popular idea that collective identities just naturally formed within groups and that they remained static and unchanging over time. Instead, he argues that collective identity is socially constructed and that it's the product of "the intentional or non-intentional consequence of interactions which in their turn are socially patterned and structured," so they could change over time (Eisenstadt 1998:140). It is presumable that one main reason for collectivity in Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil is present because of the history of racism, discrimination and disparities that have plagued Afro-Ecuadorians since the before the time their nation even existed. The racism, discrimination and

disparities were and still are products of a Latin American society, having a pattern and structure, which has been and at times still is very hostile to Afro-Ecuadorians.

Dawn Moon posits that collectivity is the result of identity politics, and that identity politics are by-products of "systematic stigmatization and structural disadvantage," (Moon 2012). For her study, she researched the varying ways people form collective identities and for her it boils down to how one views himself and the boundaries they set up to differentiate themselves from others. In her study population, she identified four models that illustrate one's collective self: *Reified Identity Politics (Embattled Self), Evangelism (Redeemed Self), Humanistic Dialogue (Relating Self) and Critical Solidarity (Political Self).*

The *Embattled Self* group is present whenever "actors engaged reifying identity politics create a sense of security by defining the boundaries between 'us' and 'them;' 'they' are the oppressors and 'we' are the oppressed," (Moon 2012:1351). Members expressing these sentiments have binary sentiments, it's black or white, you're either with the group or you're against the group, there isn't any gray area. Non-conformers don't have a space in the group. People belonging to the *Relating Self* group are the opposite of the *Embattled Self* group, they don't believe in an "us" vs. "them" dichotomy but believe that by focusing on the similarities across different groups and relating to each other can result in uniting everyone. This group leans on identic politics' idea of "creating a shared consciousness," and focuses on "breaking down boundaries between the self and the other" (Moon 2012:1355).

Critical Solidarity (Political Self) is a combination of both the *Embattled Self* and the *Relating Self* as it "draws from the social-system level focus of identity politics as well as humanistic dialogue's relational, compassionate view of the other," (Moon 2012:1359). Members of *Critical Solidarity* do focus on inequalities, but they don't depend on them to provide their group with

meaning like members from the *Embattled Self* group. For examples, they would not "work with policy makers against other groups, but would rather work with other groups in solidarity in order to change policy making," (Moon 2012:1360). The *Redeemed Self* group shares the perspective of the *Embattled Self* in reference to there being two sides (an "us" vs. "them" or a "good vs. evil." Moon defines her use of evangelism as, "any process of teaching others that there is good and evil and recruiting them to the side of good," (Moon 2012:1363). The author did note that there is a time and place for each of the models, yet the last model listed isn't found as frequently as the others.

The *Relating Self* model could be very beneficial for members of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil and other non-Afro-Ecuadorians. If there was a way to get people to talk about their similarities, it could have a very positive impact on race relations in the Ecuadorian Republic. Unfortunately, I did not interview many people who shared this point of view, but there was one man, Jerry, who said that a successful Afro-Ecuadorian organization would know better than to "only focus on Afro-Ecuadorians." It would be interesting to see what Guayaquil would look like if there were more people who shared the same sentiment, but that change hasn't happened yet.

Scholar Mabogo More tackles the question of what people should do when they are grouped together and oppressed just because of the way they look and supports the creation of groups based on "the emancipatory racial solidarity tradition" that was common in South Africa (Mabogo 2009:20). He notes that other forms of social liberation like assimilation and integration haven't been as popular as black identity and solidarity, even though some non-black people consider the latter forms as divisive and racist. It seems as though the later forms of social liberation he mentions are viable options for the oppressed group, especially in a population of black South Africans. In South African racial politics, there was a strict delineation between being black or white, and

societal structures like apartheid were put in place to further impress upon all people that blacks and whites should be kept separate.

Miscegenation or racial mixing was against the law, and unlike racial politics in Latin America, which viewed mixed-race children as less Afro-descendant, in South Africa they were considered black. Unfortunately, the ideas of cultural and racial whitening, which were so prominent in Latin American societies, and racial politics that lured many into believing they lived in a type of racial democracy, inhibited many afro-descendants from recognizing their blackness and the opportunity to develop a strong racial consciousness or strong black identity like the one Mabogo describes in his research. While I do believe it is evident that Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil have been able to form collectivity and solidarity in face of the struggles they have experienced, I do not believe they are expressed or experienced at very high levels.

Stigmatization has played a significant role in the lives of Afro-descendants in Ecuador, and Guayaquil is not an exception. Based on the research by Dawn Moon, we know that stigmatization can be very important in the formation of collectivity, but it can also be very important in the formation of solidarity since it's a shared experience (2012). In his essay on race-related solidarity, Blum outlines three types of solidarity that can exist within communities like the ones Afro-Ecuadorians have had living in Guayaquil. In his research, he highlights solidarity based on an identity group, where people share a condition; a shared experience group, where people have formed solidarity based on experiences they have in common; and a political commitment group where solidarity is based on political values, principles and commitments (2017). For this study, the first two are most relevant since political views were not topics discussed in interviews or with survey participants.

In their research on stigma-based solidarity, scholars Maureen Craig and Jennifer Richeson discuss how some members of different stigmatized groups bond together to form coalitions (Craig and Richeson 2016). There were many factors that should be considered for different groups to actually come together, but perceived discrimination was one of the most common denominators. Although the authors based a majority of their data for out-group coalitions, and out-group coalitions would do wonders for the Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil and elsewhere, in-group coalition may be most relevant for the study population from my research. To answer the question above about why more people have not gotten involved in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, applying the caveats (moderators) mentioned by Craig and Richeson could probably help.

The first moderator they mention deals with "*zero-sum perceptions*" or perceiving contexts as competitive, for example within the Afro-Ecuadorian context, if people perceive that certain members of the group are receiving more resources, others might start to resent that group and view them in a more negative light. This would cause conflict and people will want to disassociate themselves with those group members. The second moderator, "*positive contact with the dominant group,"* posits, "positive contact with members of the dominant group reduces solidarity among stigmatized groups," (Craig and Richeson 2016:24). In Guayaquil, this would be an example of Afro-Ecuadorians refusing to work with other Afro-Ecuadorians because they've had better experiences with non-Afro-Ecuadorians or mestizos and have created more of an affinity for them than for Afros. Although I did not witness many cases like this in Ecuador, I did meet many people who would rather disassociate themselves from Afro-Ecuadorians and have rejected their blackness for fear of being treated like an Afro-Ecuadorian. This is very similar to the "*prejudice-expression norms*" moderator that the authors list where, "contextual norms about prejudice can also influence

stigmatized-group members' behavior regarding stigmatized out-groups," (Craig and Richeson 2016:24) or other stigmatized in-group members.

The last moderator they list is "*position of groups in society,*" which I would change to "position of members in the community." Here the authors state that the "stigmatized groups' relative status in society can also shape intra-minority intergroup relations." Minority group members usually tend to display more bias towards members that are more popular or higher up in the social hierarchy (White and Langer 1999). Within the Afro-Ecuadorian communities this plays out as the elite, college-educated, professional job-having members versus the non-elite members, and sometimes the rivalry seems very related to social status.

These contributions are of great importance to understanding how Afro-descendants are viewed in Latin America, and they provide glimpses into the lives of the groups residing there. They also provide insight to what life is like for Afro-Ecuadorians, including their struggles and triumphs, their organizations, their founders, organizers and past participants, but what about the common people, what are the perspectives and factors that motivate their participation or lack thereof within these organizations? How are Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil responding to Afro-descendant NGOs in Guayaquil?

This investigation will contribute to the scholarship on Afro-descendant participation in social movement organizations in nations where the dominant mestizo (persons of Spanish/European and Amerindian descent) population has employed longstanding ideologies of mestizaje and whitening, Afro-descendant migration within a Latin-American country, the negative effects of *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento* on the present-day psyches of Afro-Latinos, and a re-imagination of areas associated with blackness in Ecuador. In regards to the interdisciplinary aspect of anthropology, this project could also contribute to immigration studies, gender studies, social

movement and mobilization studies, and an offer details of the legacy of slavery on three continents. It may also reveal factors that inhibit or promote minority participation in social movement organizations, this in turn, may lead to the creation of strategies that can be applied to improving minority participation with social movement organizations globally.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Soy Negra…De Los Estados Unidos

Being a black researcher from the U.S., focused on other black people living in Ecuador allows for a unique perspective. Some have even argued that the interrelationship of researcher attributes can influence the research process (Bhopal 2009, 2010; Phoenix 2001) in Ochieng 2010. Being a black woman who can speak the language of my research population provided me with opportunities that might have otherwise been kept away from me if I were a white anthropologist studying a black minority population. Looking like your participants is a great way to collect qualitative data about what it's like to go through a day as they do. I blended in riding the bus, walking through markets, eating in food courts, carrying groceries to my home, sitting in black-owned hair salons, wandering through malls and departments stores, and while sipping *mi café* at *Sweet and Coffee*. The only time I received strange looks were when I crossed the invisible line into areas where *Afros* didn't go or some woman mistakenly thought that I was trying to steal her man… (that happened twice). As a result of those experiences, I learned very quickly to look for and address the woman first if I wanted to survey a couple.

Many times, I was told that I looked Ecuadorian, but not necessarily from Guayaquil. Once I got into an argument with a police officer near an immigration office at the main bus terminal. He did not believe that I was not from Ecuador or Colombia and indeed a North American until I showed him my passport. He didn't believe that black people from the U.S. could speak Spanish or would be where I was. Needless to say, it was easy for me to approach people and speak with them about my research interests. I am a fluent Spanish speaker, but not a native Spanish speaker, and the

Spanish I learned and use most frequently is based on a central Mexican dialect. After beginning a conversation, people could usually figure out that I wasn't from Ecuador, but that did not stop them from wanting to converse with me and share their experiences. I felt at ease speaking with them and I assume that the feeling was mutual. Some people were very surprised that the black woman from the United States was so interested in their lives and what was going on in their city and country.

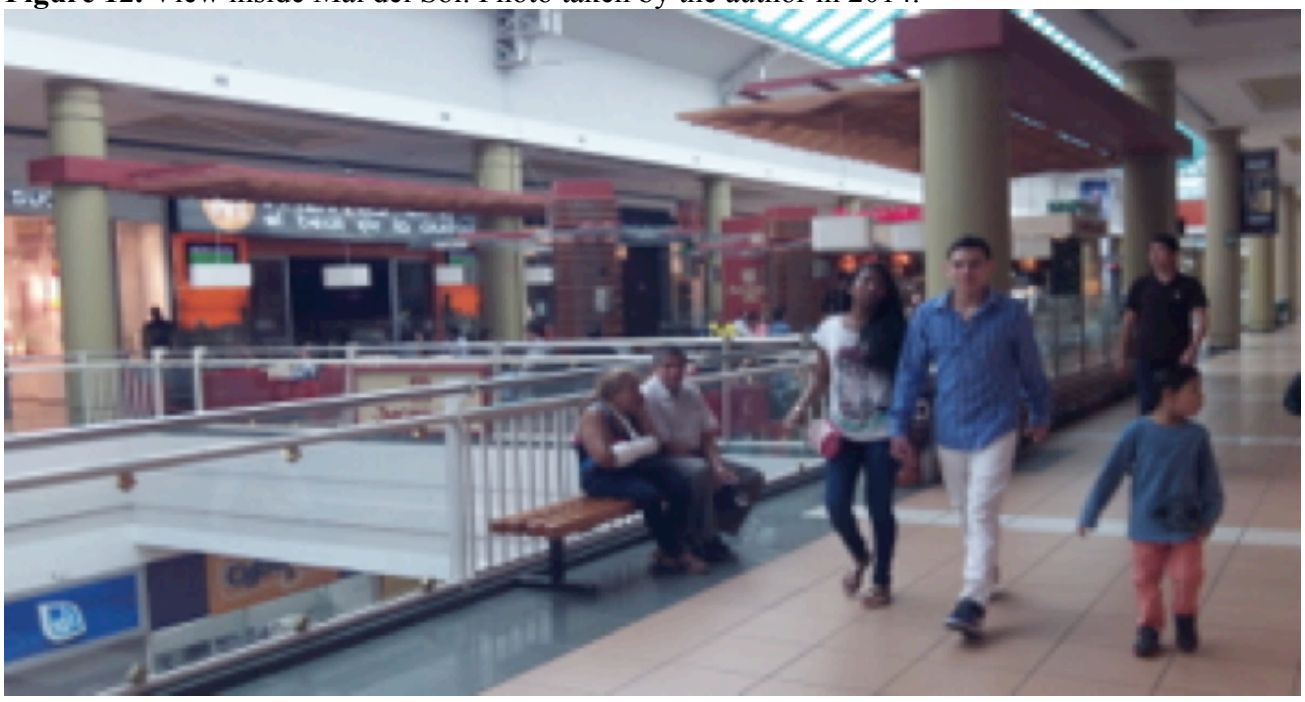
Figure 11. Afro-Ecuadorian beauty salon and supply shop. Photo taken by the author in 2014

There were many times where I was converted into the interviewee and people wanted to know all about my experiences at home, looking for comparisons with their own personal experiences. Participants asked me what it was like to live in a country with a black president. They wanted to know what race relations were like in the United States. Many people assumed that having a black president meant that racism in the United States was over and that race was no longer an issue. Then, others, who were more engaged in the actual state of events at home, would ask me how the murders of Trayvon Martin and Mike Brown could happen if racism was no longer an issue? Some even asked me about the rioting in Ferguson, which occurred before my trip to Guayaquil. At times, their questions made me reflect on the racism and discrimination in the United States and they would cause me to wonder about the legitimacy of my research in Ecuador, while we were having so many issues with police brutality, racism and discrimination at home. However, each time I listened to and witnessed experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil, the legitimacy and relevance of my research became clear. Seeing how much people wanted to share their lives with me and through me compelled me to stay focused and carry on.

All of my experiences with participants and non-participants were very informative and most times I really enjoyed the time participants allowed me to spend time with them. During some interviews, I was "*othered."* I would become *"una negra diferente"* (a different kind of black woman) or they would call me *"estudiada"* (educated) but in a tone that meant I wasn't like any other or "typical" black person. It seemed as my achieved status of being a student, being a person who has made it to the university and graduated, made me starkly different from other people who looked like me, and it meant that I should receive atypical treatment. This wasn't the first time I had been "*othered,*" previously an acquaintance (who happens to be Mexican) said to me *"Tú no eres como las otras morenas por aquí"* (you're not like the other black girls around here). Then as a

Spanish teacher working in a city of approximately 80,000 people in central Texas, my students "othered me" all of the time. I do not believe it's due to the fact that I graduated from a university, but because I'm black and I speak Spanish fluently, and in their minds, black people (from the United States) don't speak Spanish. They often ask if any of my family members or I were Cuban or Dominican. Outside of my workplace within the African-American community, having a degree or especially an advanced degree from a university will guarantee some looks. Sometimes they are looks of admiration and other times, not so much. Despite this "othering" I was still able to conduct my research successfully.

Figure 12. View inside Mal del Sol. Photo taken by the author in 2014.



What Happened in the Field

I decided to employ many ethnographic techniques to conduct my project. Participant observation was one of the most important techniques I utilized for this investigation. Being able to see how and where my participants lived, how they socialized or didn't socialize with others and then being able to compare what I saw with what they told me, provided me with an in-depth perspective of so many more aspects than one-sided interviews or observations. The majority of my observations were converted into field notes. These notes detailed my personal interactions with participants as well as observations of and conservations with non-participants. I also conducted 150 surveys; this was a very important technique that added a quantitative component to my investigation. I conducted many surveys opportunistically because many of the participants I surveyed were complete strangers that I met on the streets, at the mall or in the markets. I did utilize some snowball sampling, but that only consisted of a small portion.

Some of the survey participants agreed to interviews too. I conducted a total of 60 interviews. The majority of the interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes, but there were a few participants who decided to talk to me for over 60 minutes because they had a lot to share and the time to do so. These interviews were more detailed than the surveys, and for that reason they were lengthier than the surveys. In the interviews, I asked people open-ended questions and if that answer prompted another question most of the participants were kind enough and would patiently answer my extended questions.

I took pictures, not necessarily of people but of what people saw, their surroundings. The saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words," is very fitting, especially in my line of research. Many of the pictures I took provide an outlook of what Afro-Ecuadorians see every day and other

pictures illustrate what Afro-Ecuadorians do when they come together for their organizations. All of these methods allowed me to collect the information I needed for my research questions.

Figure 13. View inside Mal del Sur. Photo taken by the author in 2014

Participant observation in Guayaquil was not difficult. Being black and fitting in with roughly ten to twelve percent of the population, meant that I could move around like many of my participants. I rode the Metrovia like them, we would be packed tight as sardines during peak hours, and personal space was non-existent. I walked around like them in popular spaces like parks and major avenues. I went grocery shopping in stores and markets like them and I was able to do this without appearing to be the obvious foreigner that did not belong. I was able to walk around the

touristic historic district the same way I walked around my neighborhood. Security or an anti-theft team would also stalk me, depending on which store I went to. That has also happened to me in the United States, so it was not a strange occurrence. Once I was sick and had to go to the neighborhood clinic, I was asked for my *cedula,* it is an official Ecuadorian identification card, of course I did not have one. I had to use my passport, but the fact that the nurse asked me and grilled me about not having it, goes to show how others assumed I was an Afro-Ecuadorian at times, (see Figures 11-17).

Through participant observation I was able to gain insight into what happens during event planning for certain organizations, and then I also got to witness and participate in those events. I was able to ask for opinions of those events and compare them with my own experiences. I have had many opportunities to volunteer with organizations charged with uplifting African-American communities in Ohio and Michigan. As a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, service to your community is a very important component. Participating in events to help raise political awareness about the importance of voting, or spending time mentoring young adult women, and helping send aid for earthquake victims are just some of the ways I've tried to do my part as a global citizen and advocate for those I felt I could help. I carried these beliefs with me as I conducted research and engaged in participant observation while in Guayaquil.

Having Afro-Ecuadorian friends allowed me to witness various aspects of Afro-Ecuadorian life, like visiting different barrios of different family members, coming together with friends to help a mother prepare for her son's wake. I was able to volunteer at a "garage sale" for a youth club, which turned into an impromptu speaking engagement, focusing on the importance of education and becoming bilingual. All of this helped me meet and to get to know others, their views and perspectives of Guayaquil and just partake in opportunities, which may not have been available to a researcher without ties to the community.

Figure 14. View of a plaza at the Universidad Estatal. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

The surveys I conducted played an important role in this project and they contributed a quantitative aspect to the project. They contained questions focused on the following topics: education, employment, geography, family life, housing, Ecuadorian society, racism and discrimination, self-identification, group participation, Afro-Ecuadorian unity, definitions of success, solidarity and collectivity, and lastly opinions about the existence and functionality of the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement. I wanted to gain as much information about living in the city and learn as much as possible about people's experiences from these surveys. These were lengthy surveys and I hoped to gain information that might show possible factors that affected participation. I hoped they might show correlations between having an education or lack thereof and participation, or if wealth

was a factor, if having a good-paying job and owning a home meant definite participation in a group or organization, because you had the means to do so, or if it provided a reason not to participate because they have already obtained what they needed. I wanted to know if regionalism was a factor, that is why I asked about geography. Many of the participants came from the province of Esmeraldas, about a ten-hour bus ride north of Guayaquil. Asking about self-identification was a key question in this survey seeing that Michael Hanchard mentioned having a developed "racial consciousness," (Hanchard 1994). I believed that if people identified as members in the same group that it might prove itself as a factor promoting participation in organizations and groups. When I asked them about family life, I wanted to know if or how being married and or having children factored into participation.

Figure 15. View from a plaza at the Universidad Laica. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

I questioned participants about their experiences with racism and discrimination, even though there have been multiple reports about its existence in Ecuadorian society. I asked about their experiences so that I could ask them what they did to "combat" racism and discrimination, and to gauge whether or not there were any changes from previous reports. I questioned many participants about the unity or lack thereof in the Afro-Ecuadorian community nationally as well as the *afroguayaquileña* community on a local level. I was curious to see if others felt the same way as Mrs. Sonia España, who had stated that, "There are little groups… there is no movement… it doesn't exist, it's a lie. When all the blacks, when we are one, just one, then we are going to have a true movement" (Rivera 2012). I asked participants to define "*éxito*" or success, so that I would be able to gage how successful a certain organization or group was, based on participant definitions. I also asked participants to define both "*colectividad*" and "*solidaridad,*" collectivity and solidarity, and to provide me with examples of each word that they have witnessed themselves. I wanted to know what these words meant to participants and I wanted to know what roles these ideas played in *afroguayaquileña* communities. Some participants struggled with the questions about defining what solidarity and collectivity meant to them, but that was understandable. What person randomly walks up to strangers and asks them to provide their own personal definition of such terms? Fortunately, many participants were able to provide me with definitions of what those two terms meant to them.

The surveys were conducted all over the city, and most of the time they were primarily opportunistic, although occasionally I would set a time and a place to meet someone to conduct a survey. I conducted surveys in the following places: in the food courts and popular areas of major shopping malls such as *San Marino*, *Mall del Sur*, *Mall el Fortín* and *Mall del Sol*. In markets like *La Bahía*, located downtown and *Mercado Caraguay*, located a ten minute walk from the neighborhood of *Ciudadela Almendras,* where my cousin (who helped me as an assistant), and I

resided; outside of a metropolitan police station, and at the *Ministerio de Salud*; in *parroquías* associated with blackness such as *Fertisa, Isla Triniteria, Nigería, Vergeles, Sociovivienda II,* near and in *Guasmos*; at *Metrovía* stops and the central bus terminal; at two universities, *la Universidad Estatal* in various departments*, la Universidad Laica Vicente Roca*; at the municipal library, and offices of registered and unregistered organizations like *CODAE, FUDINE, Proceso AfroAmerica Siglo XXI, Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano, Fundacion Humanista;* at hair salons and bakeries; at parks like *Parque Centenario, Parque Semanes*; and even on random streets and intersections throughout downtown.

Figure 16. View of the historic downtown area. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

I surveyed participants throughout the city because the people who live in Guayaquil don't just stay in the neighborhoods they live in, they leave to go to work or go shopping, or to visit with others. I thought that by surveying people around the city I would have different answers and opinions for the survey, that I would have more people with different opinions for the interviews. I selected survey candidates based on how they looked (did the person look afro-descendent), and what they were engaged in at that very moment. If I was in a food court I wouldn't approach someone until it looked like they had finished their meal, and if they were in a group, I would only approach if the group was no larger than three people (it was very difficult to survey more than three people at once). When I was on the street wandering around "*el centro*" (downtown), walking around a mall, or a "*mercado*," I would introduce myself, walk and talk with people, and then ask if they would like to participate in the survey. If people were curious and had time to spare they would consent and speak with me; if they did not have time or interest with the project, they would politely say no and keep on their way.

I conducted interviews so that I could get even more insight into how people felt about themes from my investigation. The surveys might last 3-5 minutes but the interviews averaged about 30-45 minutes. The interviews provided participants with the time to tell me about their personal experiences living in Guayaquil, what they have or haven't seen in terms of an Afro-Ecuadorian social movement, and what they've witnessed as examples of solidarity and collectivity in their communities. I listened to many stories about racism and discrimination. They produced contrasting ideas that hinted the racial/discrimination climate was subsiding versus it being very present, just in a different form. For example, there are some afroguayaquileños that are obtaining different political positions and recognition from the government.

However, even with the *Decreto 60* and the fact that it's been over five years since its enactment, there were still jobs denied to Afro-Ecuadorians. At malls where I surveyed and interviewed participants, I would see a few Afro-Ecuadorians strolling around and shopping, but outside of custodial work, I only saw one Afro-Ecuadorian man working in the mall, at a movie theatre. I've only seen Afro-Ecuadorians working at banks as security guards. Then I had one participant tell me that she was denied employment at a department store because her skin wasn't the right color, she was too dark. When I shared this information with non-afro participants I would hear responses like, "they don't like to work," or "there aren't any who are qualified." At first, I thought that line of thinking was random and specific to those particular individuals, but as I heard it more frequently I began to change my opinion and think that it might be the perspective of many others in Ecuador. With a society perpetuating stereotypes like this, I could see how challenging it might be to combat racism and discrimination. I could also see how these stereotypes still negatively impact people's lives.

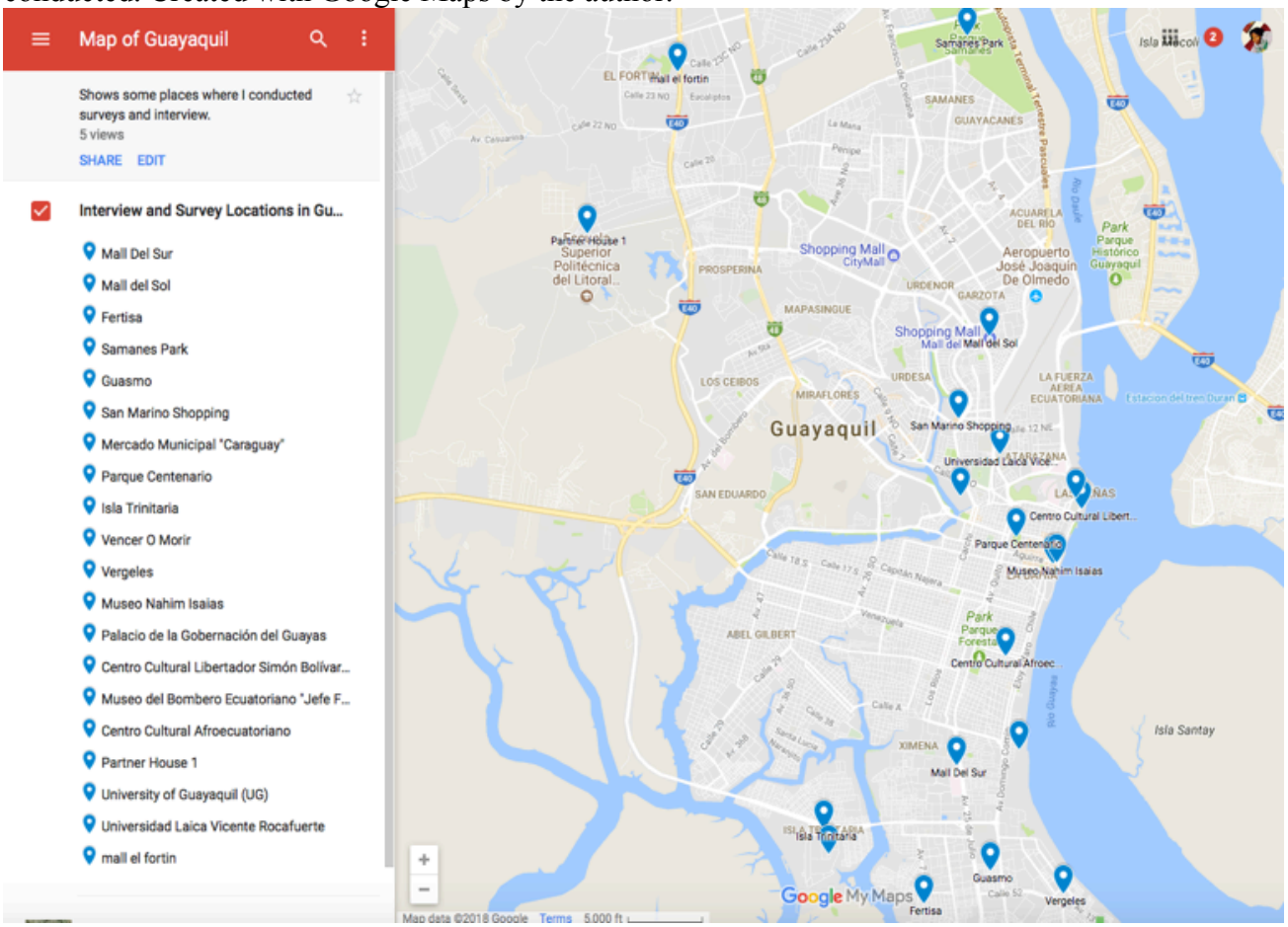
In addition to anecdotes about experiences with racism and discriminatory behavior, people told me about their journeys to blackness, or discovering that they were afro-descendent and what that meant to them during the interviews. I found these stories very interesting. Growing up in the United States, you learn what you are at home as you grow up and if you are fortunate enough you learn about some of your heritage and other people like you at school (especially, during that one month of the year), it is easy to ask, "What do you mean you learned you were black?" However, in Latin America pushing away blackness was and is so common for people, that one may not learn about their heritage until it is hurled into their faces by others, and usually in a pejorative or derogatory way. Many Afro-Ecuadorians of mixed heritage are raised to negate their blackness, and in Latin American societies, if your skin tone is light enough and your curls aren't too tight, that

negation is expected and accepted. I have even met people in Ecuador whom one would assume to be afro-descendant because of their features but insist on negating their blackness and completely disassociate themselves from anything or anyone black, even their own family members.

I have met people who still believe in the idea of "Mejorar la raza," translated as "bettering the race," which means that darker-skinned afro-descendant people should marry up by marrying mestizo, white, or people lighter-skinned than themselves. I have heard stories of Afro-Ecuadorian people who are married to other Afro-Ecuadorian people of the same darker complexion who refuse to let their children date people of the skin pigmentation. Some Ecuadorians have explained the phenomena to me as a type of defense mechanism versus an interracial discrimination. For people who think in this manner, having lighter-skinned (grand) children keeps them safe from the prejudices and racism that their (grand) parents had to and/or continue to deal with. To an afro-descendant born outside of Latin America, this idea can seem confusing or offensive but understanding how race works in Ecuador and other Latin American countries, could help remedy that confusion. We all believe in doing what is necessary "to make it work."

The combination of techniques used in collecting data for this project, provided me with information and in varying ways that they allowed for multiple perspectives and ideas about all the experiences I witnessed and was told about. Writing my own field notes produced introspection about living these experiences and interacting with participants and getting to know what they did in Guayaquil. The surveys and interviews opened my eyes to aspects of life in Guayaquil that I would not have obtained by only utilizing one form of inquiry. This mixed method approach was extremely necessary for studying factors that may promote or prohibit participation in Afro-Ecuadorian organizations. It also provided ample opportunities to understand how collectivity and solidarity work within the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil.

Figure 17. Map of Guayaquil with pins of some places where interviews and surveys were conducted. Created with Google Maps by the author.



What Happened When I Returned from the Field

When it was time to analyze all of the data, I reviewed my field notes and all the events I had witnessed and participated in, and the survey data and the interviews I conducted. Since I had only completed 150 surveys, I decided to use Microsoft Excel to record the data I collected from those surveys. Each survey question had its own page, and each page had at least 150 entries. I transcribed

the interviews so that I see at what people said, then I compared and contrasted the similarities and differences. After I transcribed the interviews, I gave my participants pseudonyms to protect their privacy, as I said I would when they decided to participate in interviews and during surveys. Once I had all the survey data in Excel, I used basic

functions such as count and concatenate, to calculate the frequency of certain terminology, to determine if married women, or married men participated more in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, or if it was the opposite. I used the functions to combine other demographic fields such as education and employment, as well as to determine how many people in my research population migrated to Guayaquil, and from where they may have migrated. After the data was compiled in this manner, I was able to generate graphs and charts to present the data in an alternative visual way.

Many of the chapters are centered on the questions and answers I received from the surveys and interviews. However, there is one chapter that is the result of a common theme that I kept hearing over and over again. That theme helped me write the chapter on the power of words, especially when they are used negatively. In the following chapter, I will share some of the experiences I encountered while I conducted research. This chapter goes into detail about different Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, their meetings and events that I attended, but it also highlights some observations focusing on people and spaces in Guayaquil.

CHAPTER IV

AFRO-ECUADORIAN NGOS, SOLIDARITY, AND COLLECTIVITY IN ACTION

In this chapter I discuss why NGOs are created and how they function. I also address what I witnessed as I conducted research in Guayaquil. As I searched for interviewees and survey participants, I visited a few Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. I was also invited into people's homes and to events hosted by their organizations.

According to Vakil, NGOs are "self-governing not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people" (Vakil 1997, 2060 in Morgan 2016). NGOs have taken on important roles in international development as well as "advocacy and capacity building of individuals and communities and are held up as being well-positioned to offer innovative and flexible services which are grassroots and respond to local need," (Morgan 2016, 175). Many of the Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs have been able to accomplish what Morgan has described by hosting workshops and seminars, teaching young women to be entrepreneurs, and by providing services that are specific to the needs of people living in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil.

Carlos Concha Association and Fertisa

The Carlos Concha Association is one Afro-Ecuadorian NGO located in the neighborhood of Fertisa, which is located in the southern part of Guayaquil. I was invited to a BINGO game thrown by this organization as a type of fundraiser. When I got to Fertisa for the game, I thought it would be a great opportunity to witness firsthand how close (or not) this community was. People I had surveyed before told me that Fertisa was very united, and from what I observed, that was the case. In order to play BINGO, people had to buy BINGO cards, which were sold for $1. There were different prizes available to win, cookware, like pots and pans, knives, food containers, and even clothes

hampers. There were about 40-50 people there, most of them women, although I did see about 5-6 men playing too. This aspect was not surprising as women usually participate more in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. The majority of the participants looked Afro-Ecuadorian, but there were also mestiza-looking people playing too. There were people playing who were young teenagers, along with elders 75 years old and everything in between. This particular game of BINGO took place outside of a member's home. Carlos Concha doesn't possess an actual building where they can host events and meetings, so they meet and plan in each other's homes, or at the Afro-Amercia Siglo XXI headquarters. It was rainy that afternoon, so large plastic tarps were tied to four homes so that we had cover from the rain. Women brought their children to the game. The kids who were old enough to play independently were set loose to run about the area where we played, women with babies just held on to them and tried to win a prize.

People played with a lot of BINGO cards, usually over five, (see Figure 18). I saw one lady play with 12 cards and another played with 15 cards, I don't know how they kept up with the game, but they managed. The game lasted about two hours, I didn't win anything, but I still had a nice time. During the game, it was loud, someone at another house was blasting music, and I saw people laughing, talking, and smiling. I could also hear the street traffic coming from a block away; cars, buses, motorcycles and *tri-motos* were constantly passing through the neighborhood. At times, I was nervous for the children, as they were free to wander around, but I suppose their parents did not mind because it seemed like someone was always watching out for them. I watched two older Afro-Ecuadorian ladies cook and sell food during the game. They sold *salchipapas* (hot dogs and fries) for $1 as well as *empanadas de queso* (cheese empanadas) for $0.50. Players, as well passersby bought food, I even bought some for my cousin and myself. Contrary to what the Ecuadorian society at large would have you think about "black gatherings," in "black neighborhoods," the game was

peaceful, there were not any fights or arguments, and people seemed to genuinely enjoy themselves. We left Fertisa after the game, it was between 7:30-8:00pm, and it was starting to get dark. As we waited for the bus to arrive, I got details about how the neighborhood used to look. Thirty years ago, people lived in sugar cane houses on top of the mangroves. There were no paved streets or concrete homes and flooding occurred frequently. I did see a few sugar cane and wooden homes in the area, but the majority of the homes were made of concrete, which shows that there has been an increase in development in the area. Fertisa is considered a black neighborhood by the participants I surveyed, but as I canvassed the area it was clear that mestizo people lived there too.

Figure 18. Carlos Concha BINGO participants in Fertisa. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

I witnessed people working together, fellowship and raise money for their organization, at this event. Everyone was pleasant, and a few women even decided to help me with my project by completing surveys. More than twenty people showed up to participate and it was an overall well-planned and well-executed event. One interviewee told me that people like to show up at events when there are give-a-ways. I am not sure that this event counted as a give-a-way event because people had to spend money to win something, and they had to spend money to eat. I was not able to attend any formal meetings or workshops hosted by this organization, so I did not get the chance to compare this event with another Carlos Concha Association event. However, I did get the opportunity to attend and participate in the events hosted by FUDINE (*Fundacion del Desarrollo Integral del Negro Ecuatoriano*), the Afro-Ecuadorian Cultural Center in Guayaquil, and *Fundación Unificación*.

FUDINE

FUDINE hosts an International Afro-Circuit annually. It lasted three days from September 26th to September 28th in the fall of 2014. I attended the organization's program of events for all three days. This was the ninth year FUDINE had hosted this program and this year's theme was "*Expresiones Negras"* (*Black Expressions*). On the opening day of the program a "huge" parade/march was supposed to take place. The parade started about forty-five minutes late (which isn't completely unexpected or a big deal) but there were only about twenty people present including my cousin and myself before people started to move. Once everything started, there was an all-male group of dancers from Senegal, called *Los Tigres* (the Tigers); a co-ed group from Peru (some of them looked afro-descendant) *Agrupacion Cultural Internacional Expresiones Negras del Peru* (Peruvian International Black Expressions Cultural Group) from Tumbes, a city located in northern Peru; then there was another co-ed group of Bolivians who weren't afro-descendant at all, and about

10 Afro-Ecuadorians including the organization's founder in the parade. It was evident that *Los Tigres* were of African descent, they hailed from the continent, and they looked like afro-people. This was not the case for the Peruvian group, as they looked more mestizo than Afro-descendant it was difficult to recognize their afro-descendent features. Perhaps some members of this group identified as afro-descendants or they shared an appreciation for the culture. I tried to make the connection as to why the Bolivians were at the *Black Expressions* event, because they did not perform or represent any form of blackness in the parade.

Figure 19. FUDINE parade participants from Bolivia (wearing green), Peru (wearing red), and Senegal (wearing yellow with stripes). Photo taken by the auhtor in 2014.

This parade lasted 20 minutes and it took us around a small part of the historic downtown area (an area prided for its European architecture and designs). People came out of their offices and businesses to see what happened, but there was huge lack of Afro-Ecuadorian support and participation., (see Figures 19-20) I thought to myself, ok this was an international event, but it was hosted by an Afro-Ecuadorian organization founded and operated in Guayaquil, so where were the Afro-Ecuadorians, and why hadn't there been any local afro performers included in these events? I never received a direct answer from the organization's president.

Figure 20. FUDINE parade procession leaders. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

We attended the second "breakout" event of the day for the organization and it was hosted at an outdoor amphitheater, Plaza Colon, which could hold over two hundred people and was located downtown near *El Faro Santa Ana,* a popular tourist attraction. The same two groups from the

parade performed, the Bolivians were MIA. The audience consisted of 20 people, including my cousin, and myself and there was a total of seven black people there, (five if I excluded my cousin and myself). The show didn't start until near 7:00pm, and only two of the three groups scheduled to perform were present. Audience numbers were low, and aside from the performers (the Senegalese group and the Peruvian group) there were only seven black people were present. I wondered where the people were, was it due to poor promoting, lack of interest, or was something else at play?

On the second day of the program, we went to an auditorium in the Municipal Museum of Guayaquil to listen to a discussion on blackness and black experiences. I was asked to be a replacement speaker ten minutes before the discussion was supposed to take place. I wanted to help the organizer, so I agreed. When it was my turn to speak, I realized that the discussion was more about black culture and cultural expressions than it was about black experiences, none the less, I entertained the crowd (because there were actually many more people at this event than the other two events combined, about 50), with a very short discussion on police brutality and the international racial discrimination of blacks as effects of the slave trade. I decided to discuss those themes because people I surveyed before were curious about the rioting that had occurred in Ferguson, MO.[3] Many people I met in Ecuador were under the false presumption that the election of a black president meant that racism and racial discrimination had ended in the United States. The other panelists, Fritzner Cedon and Malaki MaKongo, spoke about Voodoo and art, and the cultural and societal contributions of the African continent to the world. After the discussion, we were invited to a luncheon that women from the Carlos Concha Association catered; the food was awesome! I am not sure if they had to place a bid in order to be selected for the job or if it was

[3] Rioting in Ferguson, MO from August 9th until August 24th ensued after the fatal shooting of Mike Brown, an 18 year-old black teenager by white police officer Darren Wilson.

because the leader of Carlos Concha had connections I was curious about the whether or not there was a bid involved because of the potential for profit for the organization.

Figure 21. FUDINE final event, Peruvian performers. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

There was an event scheduled at the *Centro Cívico* on the last day of the program. The activities took place outside of the theatre in a very large plaza. The performances started around 11:00am. The Senegalese group was not present, but the Bolivian group, the Peruvian group, and an Ecuadorian group performed. The Peruvian group performed some "traditional" black dances. One performance depicted slaves being mistreated by their master, those slaves rising-up against him and ultimately liberating themselves. Their performance was really intriguing to me. There I saw people who didn't obviously look black or afro-descendant on the surface, but who were so full of that

culture, its history and experiences that they 1- wanted to celebrate them and 2-did such a great job performing their history. The Bolivian group performed some "traditional" indigenous dances, but they also performed some Afro-inspired dances too. One of the performers was an Afro-Ecuadorian woman from Esmeraldas who did a dance. It was strange that I only saw one black performer at a send-off event, hosted by a black organization, that had a black president, who's headquarters was in the same city as the event, where the city had a population of 2.3 million people and 10% of that population was black. I questioned myself, did people not know about the event, was it poorly advertised, did people have an issue with the president (she did overlook multiple black organizations and communities in Guayaquil as performers), were there any attempts at collaboration with other organizations besides Carlos Concha? I never officially resolved those questions.

Despite how I felt about the event, it had a good turnout, even though there was not an overwhelming presence of Afro-Ecuadorians. The event was open to vendors, there was a lot of happening, and it was a nice day; all of these factors may have impacted the turnout. The Carlos Concha Association was there, selling typical Esmeraldian dishes like *Encocado de pollo, chuleta,* and *congrejo*. They sold out of everything they had, so I would say it was a profitable day for them. There were also juice vendors at the event, the day was a good one for them too, it was a hot day, and I saw a lot of people drinking juice. I did see more Afro-Ecuadorians at this event, the vendors were afro and the ground keepers were afro. I believe there were multiple factors for the turnout: the event happened on a Sunday, and Sunday is a family day, the *Centro Cívico* is located within a very large park, people could hear music playing, vendors were present selling food, drinks, and other items. To my knowledge, FUDINE did not host any other events while I was in Guayaquil.

Calle Ocho

I also visited an afro-neighborhood called *Calle 8*, it was near *Cisne II,* another afro-neighborhood in the southern part of Guayaquil with two of my interviewees. There were a lot of concrete homes in this area, but I also saw some sugar cane homes. The home we visited was made of concrete, and it was practically on a river bank, you could see a river in the backyard area. I saw boys fishing and one of them caught a huge catfish. I saw the inside of three homes, and from the outside of the homes, it looked like they were completely finished, but they were not finished. I didn't see finished flooring or drywall/stucco on the walls, just concrete. However, the homes were still completely furnished, kitchens, dining room and living room sets. It was on this day that I found out about other issues plaguing the Afro-Ecuadorian community such as serious cocaine addictions, which affected both children and adults, adolescent pregnancies, and child sex abuse. My interviewees told me that in some homes where men abuse alcohol and then try to pursue their women for sex in vain because they reject their advances, so then the men abuse the children in the house. I have not come across any literature about these specific set of issues, although Jean Rahier has talked about prostitution, sex and rape in Quito (Rahier 2003). My interviewees expressed to me that these issues were occurring much more frequently. When I questioned them about the use of rehabilitation centers, they told me that rehab centers were privatized, so only the people who can afford to go actually use them. They made it seem as though Afro-Ecuadorians from these neighborhoods did not have the funds to visit such facilities, and no one mentioned any Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs who attempted to change this issue.

One of the women expressed sentiment that the state did not care about what happens to her people. I saw police patrolling the neighborhood and that it was normal since the police like to make their presence felt (since black neighborhoods are dangerous). I saw many children playing soccer in

the street, passersby spoke to people who sat outside their homes. I saw Afro-Ecuadorian girls doing hair while sitting on their stoop outside their cane house. The area we were in seemed pretty relaxed. As we began to walk away from the homes we visited, a friend of my interviewees accompanied us to the main street which was about seven blocks away. I was not sure what her intentions were for walking us there, she lived in the neighborhood and was familiar with the people there, so maybe she was making sure we got there safely, or maybe she was just being hospitable. My friend, one of the interviewees, had previously warned me not to come there unless I was accompanied by someone from the area, like her friend.

Fundación Unificación

On October 4th, 2014, I went to an Afro-Ecuadorian event organized by *Fundación Unificación* FU (Unification Foundation). This was an event to help usher in Afro-Ecuadorian month, similar to Black History month in the United States. The event was hosted in Plaza Colón, which was the same place where the FUDINE event took place just a few weeks before. The FU event was much more popular than the FUDINE event, the amphitheater was about 60-70% full. There were mestiza people there, and Afro-Ecuadorian people there, but the number of Afro-Ecuadorian people at this one event outnumbered the turnout for all four FUDINE events. I assume this was due to FU having more of a connection with the Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil and at-large. Practically all the performers at this event appeared to be Afro-Ecuadorian, and they performed traditional dances like the "*Bobma"* from the sierra (the Chota-Mira Valley region) and the "*Marimba"* from the coast (the Esmeraldas provincial area). The dance troops came from Esmeraldas and Guayaquil. There were also performances from local and non-local rappers, the majority were afro, but there was also a mestizo rapper present too. The program was supposed to last until 11:00pm but my cousin and I left early around 9:00pm. It was starting to cool off quite a

bit and we still had an hour commute to get back "home." I was really pleased to see so many come out to this event, and it was great to see the dance troops performances with children and young adults who seemed so excited and proud to have had the chance to perform. This was an exciting event to watch, one where I was able to witness support and participation of Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil.

Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano

I had the opportunity to sit in on a meeting conducted in the *Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano* CCA (the Afro-Ecuadorian Cultural Center) in Guayaquil, by a group of women. The purpose for the meeting was to solidify the plans for the Afro-Ecuadorian mass that was to be held on the last Sunday of the month. The only man present was the priest, who was from the Central African Republic, the women present came from different neighborhoods, but they came together to put on this mass. Each one had different community members participate in the mass. The meeting began with a prayer, then they got straight to the point and discussed the event. It reminded me of the BGSA (Black Graduate Student Association) board meetings I used to attend at Texas A&M University. The meeting was both productive and entertaining. The women were very inviting and kind to me, even though I was an outsider, they made me feel like I was part of the group. I met with strangers many times during my research, and I can honestly say that people who participated in surveys and interviews would invite my cousin and I to their homes, they would make sure we were comfortable, and they always offered us a meal.

Figure 22. View inside the *Iglesia Maria Auxiliadora.* Photo taken by the author in 2014.

In October 2014, I attended a morning mass at a Catholic Church, which was dedicated to Afro-Ecuadorians. It was a fairly large church it was bright and very quiet. It reminded me of St. Mary's in Northeastern Ohio, a Catholic church I used to sit in every morning before school started (it was a required for attending the school), this church was clean, very bright and very white. There was a white Jesus, white Mary, white saints and apostles, it was pretty standard for any Catholic church (see Figure 22). I'll admit I did think that those images at *Iglesia Maria Auxiliadora* should have been somewhat browner since I was in South America, but they weren't. I arrived at the church ten minutes before the mass was set to begin. Ten minutes later I heard drums, then maracas, then singing, but it wasn't for your typical Catholic Church hymn, it was loud, lively and sounded African! Some people participated in a procession with call and response singing, drums, and maracas all while wearing "dashiki" inspired clothing (see Figure 23). It was such an exhilarating and juxtaposing experience.

Figure 23. View of the Afro-Ecuadorian Mass procession. Photo taken by the author in 2014.

I felt like we (all the participants of this mass) were breaking all of the rules. This space that we were in was typically quiet, refined, non-black, with an unspoken dress code and rules, but that day it was filled with black people and noise, shouting, clapping hands, music with drums, maracas, "dashikis," and bare feet. I had never witnessed such an event in a church like this; it was so far gone from "acceptable behavior" in St. Mary's Church. In Latin America, Spaniards brought Catholicism and enforced it upon the people. This day it was as if the colonized were taking back the space from the colonizer, I witnessed the opposite of Catholicism in action where the space inside of this church was Africanized. This was an event planned by the *Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano- Guayaquil* with the help of different community leaders in Guayaquil; it was a successful collaborative project.

Fundación Humanista Dios Nos Da Luz

One organization, *Fundación Humanista Dios Nos Da Luz*, ran a daycare as one of the programs to help support members of the community. I was told that the organization receives some assistance from the state to help with the daycare (about $1.10 for each kid), but that women from the community work there and spearhead everything. On that day, there were about 50 toddlers in a large lobby-like area, which was located in the front part of the building. There were five women working there, taking care of the kids. It was a nice facility; made of concrete, had dedicated work spaces and offices. There was electricity in the building, and it was clean. I was told that other programs they offer consisted of hosting workshops for women and young adults. *Fundación Humanista* is located on Isla Trinitaria, which is located in the peripheral-southern area of Guayaquil in the neighborhood Vencer o Morir II. It is considered an Afro-area and a place that is frequently associated with blackness. At one point in time there was nothing but mangroves and water in this area like the pictures that I took of Isla Trinitaria in 2012.

MACC

I did a lot of walking while I conducted research. I walked around many different areas and sides of Guayaquil. I visited different libraries and bookstores. On one occasion, I visited the library that is attached to the Museo Antropológico y de Arte Contemporanea. (MAAC). I questioned a mestiza woman, who conducted research there, about the presence of afro-descendants in Guayaquil prior to the more recent migrations. I already knew the answer to my question, but I wanted to see what she would tell me. She proceeded to tell me that Afro-descendants were not historically in Guayaquil, but on occasion black people did settle in Guayaquil once they were freed to build ships. I told her she was slightly incorrect, so she conducted a quick Google search and showed me the

snippet of an article posted on Wikipedia to prove me wrong. I told her that Wikipedia did not always have all the right answers.

She continued to scroll on her screen looking for proof to defend her stance. She stopped scrolling when she came to an article that highlighted the fact that Guayaquil was used as a slave port and that the enslaved were sent to different areas of the country from there. This exercise proved a lot, but my main takeaway was that if this educated lady researching history at the MAAC didn't know the history of black people living in Guayaquil, then majority of people living in Guayaquil most-likely did not know either. This exercise also highlighted the invisibility and exclusion of Afro-Ecuadorian history in Ecuador which seems to still be very prevalent, despite the changes made in the constitution.

I also compiled a list of Afro-Ecuadorian organizations that either survey partipants and interviewees were affiliated with, (see Table 1). I had the opportunity to visit some of these organizations' offices and events. There is also another list of organizations in the city of Guayaquil that was given to me from a friend who worked for the *Denfensorio del Pueblo* (the Ombudsman's office). It is located in Appendix C.

Table 1. List of Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs provided during interviews and surveys.

	Name of Organization:	When it was founded:	Why was it created:	How they help the community:	How many people they serve:	Interests are:	Location in Guayaquil:	Occupy actual office space:
1	Anjoa	2003	Help youth through dance and culture	Provides an opportunity to learn about Afro-Ecuadorian culture through dance and music	Directly 50; indirectly 150	Social and cultural	N/A	N/A
2	Asociacion de Abogados Afroecuatorianos / Afro-Ecuadorian Lawyers' Association	2006	Help the Afro-Ecuadorian community at large	Some pro-bono cases, free legal advice	25	Social	Downtown	N/A

Table 1. Continued (pg.1)

3	Asociacion Afrodescendiente, "Mujeres Idealistas"/ Afro-descendant Association, "Idealist Women"	1998;2012	Wanted to help with the lack in basic services for Afro-Ecuadorian women	Provides workshops and hosts other community activities	100 women	Social	South- Isla Trinitaria	No
4	Asociacion de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Unidas Triufaremos/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "United We Will Triumph"	2003	Wanted to focus on and work with the youth	Operates La Katarin, a meal prep kitchen.	Employs 10-12 women, feeds children at nearby elementary schools	Social	South- Isla Trinitaria	Yes
5	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Martina Carrillo"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Womens' Association, "Martina Carrillo"	1999	Help Afro-Ecuadorian women in Guayaquil	Workshops, events and discussions on topics such as, self-esteem, legal rights, family abuse	Over 80	Social	South- Isla Trinitaria	N/A
6	Asociacion Carlos Concha/ Carlos Concha Association	2005	Help the Afro-Ecuadorian community	Provide workshops	Helps in various communities (over 500)	Social	South- Fertisa	No, but collaborates with Afro-America XXI
7	Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano/ Afro-Ecuadorian Cultural Center	1981	Help Afro-Ecuadorians gain visibility	Work with women and children; provides workshops and collaborates with other organizations	Since 1981, many (thousands of) people	Social	Near downtown	Yes
8	CODAE- Corperacion de Desarrollo Afroecuatoriano/ Corporation for Afro-Ecuadorian Progress	2002	Help Afro-Ecuadorians with invisibility and human rights issues	Over 10,000 people across the nation	Acquired land for home relocation; money for basic needs	Social	Downtown	Yes
9	CUAFE (Asociacion Negros Avanzados)	2010	Help with collaboration and communication of multiple Afro-Ecuadorian organizations	Works with over 80 legal (state recognized) organizations	Project planning, and conferences	Social	Downtown	Yes

Table 1. Continued (pg.2)

10	FUDINE- Fundacion del Desarrollo Integral de Negro Ecuatoriano/ Foundation for the Comprehensive Progress of Black Ecuadorians	1996	Wanted to apply what she learned from law school to help the community	Works with women; provides workshops	Works in various communities (80-90 women)	Social and cultural	Downtown	Yes
11	Fundacion Humaniasta Dios Nos Da Luz / Humanist Foundation, "God Gives Us Light"	2006	Help combat issues that plague the community	Works with women and children; provides childcare, workshops	Directly 325, indirectly over 1,000	Social	South- Isla Trinitaria	Yes
12	Asociacion de Mujeres Progresistas/ Progressive Womens' Association	1998	Help Afro-Ecuadorian women in Guayaquil	Workshops for youth; trainings and lessons for women on topics like finances	330 directly, nearly 5,000 families indirectly	Social		
13	Proceso AfroAmerica Siglo 21 sede Ecuador/ 21st Century Afro-America Foundation, Ecuador Headquarters	1997	Help Afro-Ecuadorians combat invisibility and issues caused by racism and racial discriminatio n	Help women and children's groups. Host workshops.	Directly 2,500, indirectly 6,000; Helps in various communities	Social	Downtown	Yes
14	Union de Organizaciones de Negros de la provincia de Guayas, "Jamie Hurtado"/ Union of Black Organizations in the Guayas Province, "Jaime Hurtado"	2002	Help the Afro-Ecuadorian community	Workshops on human rights; registering for state documents; health workshops	500	Social and political	N/A	N/A

Collectivity and Solidarity

Now I will explore two ideas in which I believe Afro-Ecuadorians use to deal with burden of living in a society that is so hostile towards them. Collectivity and solidarity are important in any community, and they play special roles in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil, Ecuador. Focusing on the "why" and "how" of collectivity and solidarity for this group, could lead to a better understanding of what pushes Afro-Ecuadorians to come together and care about their neighbors.

How do solidarity and collectivity form and function in the Afro-Descendant communities of Guayaquil, Ecuador? There have been various discussions about what solidarity is and how it functions, and the same could be said about collectivity (Moon 2012; Eisenstadt 1998). Here, I will address what the definitions of both words have to do with the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil, and I also explore what these two ideas look like in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities as explained by my survey participants and interviewees.

Based on my observations, the *Embattled Self* or *Reified Identity Politics* is the best model to use in order to describe the type of collectivity in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil (Moon 2012). Afro-Ecuadorians represent a stigmatized group in Ecuadorian society where they are constantly subject to one form of oppression or another by the oppressing, dominant group in Ecuador, the mestizos. During conversations about racism or discrimination there was always as sense of "us vs. them," and "we vs. the others." I also perceived that there were "in-group" boundaries of "us vs. them" within some of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities, based on commentary from some participants, "Black people keep to themselves, even the ones in groups and organizations. There's too much selfishness (egotism)," –Jerry, 27, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

> "Collectivity is a group of people that help each other, they work together in order to obtain a benefit for everyone and they help others outside of their group. Collectivity isn't seen very often here in Guayaquil. From what I've seen people here don't like to share/collaborate. If one person is interested, then the other person isn't. In the north of the city, each person is for themselves and their own things. But in the outskirts, on Isla Trinitaria people help each other and collaborate more."
>
> –Barb, 26, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

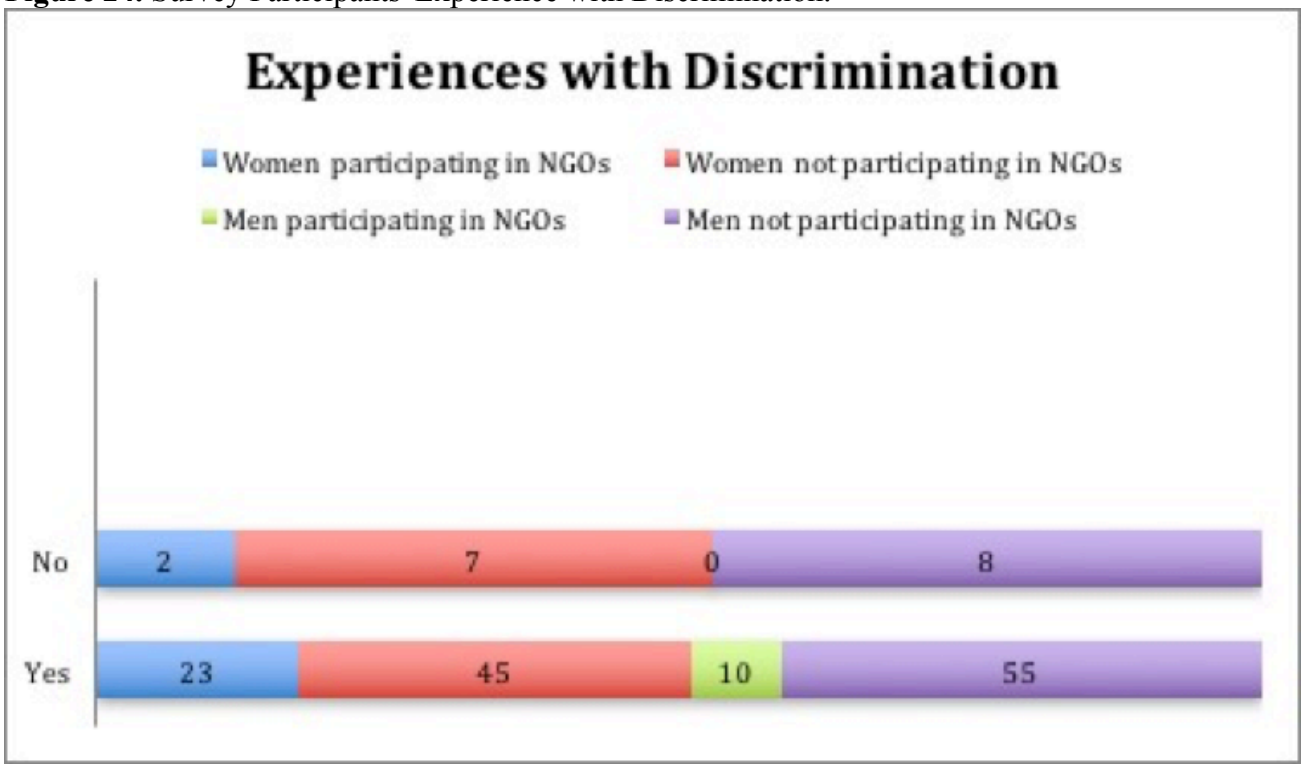
Discrimination as a Shared Experience

Even though many individuals from this population are afro-descendant, I do not think that everyone rallies together due to their condition of being afro-descendant in Latin America, but I am sure that many people do. When they described issues that afflicted their community many used the pronouns "we" or "us," which highlighted their solidarity and affinity to that group.

However, I do think that many of the participants from this study have shared experiences that had an impact on their view of solidarity, and at least one experience that nearly 90% of my participants shared: discrimination. I conducted surveys with members of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil about their experiences with discrimination.

Even though participation in Afro-Ecuadorian organizations is not great, I wondered if discrimination issues had started to become less of factor in the lives of Afro-Ecuadorians, so I prepared a question related to discrimination. Nearly 90% (89%) of the survey population (n=150), had experienced discrimination at some point in his or her lives and knew someone else who had also been discriminated against. One individual, a woman, told me about a negative experience she had a department/grocery store. She applied for a position there and once the manager sat down for an interview with her, he explained that she was too dark-skinned for the position. I could tell by the way she shared this information with me that the issue still bothered her. However, even with such horrible past experiences, she is a hard worker in her organization, and a leader in her community. Eleven percent (11%) of the survey population did not feel as though they experienced any discrimination. Trying to find a correlation between participation and being discriminated against has proven to be difficult. If so many people have been discriminated against, why isn't the number of NGO participants higher?

Figure 24. Survey Participants' Experience with Discrimination.



I asked a similar question to being discriminated against in order to gauge whether or not their responses would be similar and to see if people felt any stigma. I asked the survey takers if they felt like they were treated equally compared to other members of their society: *mestizos*, *blancos* (whites) and *indigenas* (indigenous people). Half of the survey population (50%) felt that they were treated equally. Forty-two percent (42%) did not feel as though they were treated equally; 8% felt like they were on a fence, sometimes they were treated equally and sometimes they were not treated equally (see Appendix 6).

Comparing the data for this response and the last response, 90% of the population felt discriminated against but only 42% felt that they were treated unequally. If 90% of the population is discriminated against why didn't more people feel like they were treated unequally? The nature of discrimination revolves around unequal treatment, so what could possibly be the explanation? At first, I thought it meant that in Ecuadorian society, being discriminated against was a normal part of life and that maybe it was not significantly important. However, when survey participants answered those questions oppositely, I asked them how they could experience discrimination yet feel treated equally? Many responded that they "made people respect them" by responding back to discriminatory comments. From their perspective, responding back canceled the unequal treatment. But the question still remains, if so many people still dealt with discrimination, why hadn't they gotten involved with some organization in order try to overcome it? Perhaps some Afro-Ecuadorians respond more individually against discrimination.

Contrary to the idea of wanting to put someone down, in Maruggi's experience, solidarity is as a way to express a "sense of shared humanity," much like the *Relating Self* model from Moon's research (Maruggi 2012; Moon 2012). Although his article focuses on how students understand solidarity through their interactions with others, he discussed various definitions of solidarity. One scholar Andrea Wildt traced the meaning of the word solidarity to the Latin word *solidus*, which means solid, and signified "a feeling of connection or cohesion, a natural feeling of belonging together," (Maruggi 2012:308). This was one of the ways that I believed Afro-Ecuadorians used the term solidarity. During my research many people, when speaking about the community would use terms like "us," "we," and "brother," which all tie into the ideas expressed in the definition. For example, one participant explained to me that "Solidarity is union, extending your hand to help our fellow brothers in need*."* –Jan 26, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. Afro-Ecuadorians in

Guayaquil also have a sense of shared humanity, which is exemplified in the following quote, "Solidarity is helping to serve humanity or the people in your barrio; be just, humble, be at the ready for anyone who needs your help." –Tony, 22, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Maruggi also highlights solidarity in a religious aspect as it is used in Catholic social teaching in attempt to mesh Christian scripture with Catholic doctrine to contemporary issues focusing on politics, economy, society and culture. In his essay, he quotes Pope John Paul II describing the function of solidarity as a way to "see the other," and not consider how or why they could be beneficial to our self, but as a "neighbor," and "helper," who isn't above or beneath us, but on the same level (Maruggi 2012:308). This resonates with definitions that interviewees and survey participants shared with me while I collected my data, "Solidarity is an essential element of being human; always having a bridge so we can transition into equals." –Ed, 57, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. This example also illustrates the importance of understanding that people are equals,

> "Solidarity is not being indifferent or uncaring about the need of another person. Being solidary is putting yourself in the place of the other person and seeing what's bothering them or what they need and not ignoring it; put yourself in the shoes of that person and know that this person needs something from you. For example, when one person is sick and in need, you give money without them asking you to; you extend your hand and you help them."
>
> –Megan, 36, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

The influence of Catholicism in Latin America may play a role in the definitions of solidarity that people shared with me. Ecuador, like many other Latin American countries has many practitioners of this religion. These definitions illustrate that solidarity affirms the connections and relationships we have with each other and highlights the fact that we are all responsible for each other too.

Conclusion

When I began this project, I assumed that solidarity and collectivity were two characteristics that would be present in the Afro-descendant communities in Guayaquil. This was my assumption due to the fact that many people were migrating to Guayaquil and the ever-increasing population of Afro-Ecuadorians residing there has continued to rise since 2010 (INEC 2011). Considering the disparities that plagued this group of people I wanted to know if they were using solidarity as a coping mechanism to combat those issues. I thought that solidarity and collectivity would be crucial for living in such a large and busy city like Guayaquil. During this project, I conducted surveys and interviews about solidarity and collectivity to get an idea of how they fit into the afro-descendant communities of Guayaquil.

Based on the information that participants shared with me, it's clear that there are multiple ideas about what collectivity is, "Collectivity is union and participation where one could single out a group of people, community, or city where people stick with the same objectives and look to obtain the same goals." –Henry, 73, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Unfortunately, there is also an aspect of degeneration when people speak about collectivity,

> "Collectivity is the unification of all the barrios, and communities to be able to obtain something; Afro-Ecuador isn't very collective, seems like there might be more collectivity if people made more money."
>
> –Sandy, 57, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

Just as solidarity has changed over time, collectivity also changes over time. The kind of collectivity from life before the city seems to be in decline based off of comments made by participants, and collectivity is changing with each generation.

"How do Solidarity and Collectivity form and function in Guayaquil?" For this population, both solidarity and collectivity are the products of Afro-Ecuadorians facing and fighting against stereotypes, stigmas, racism and discrimination. This population has many shared experiences and it seems as though the people who recognize and accept them are the ones who come together. We have reviewed what the scholars have to say about solidarity and collectivity, and I have been privileged enough to experience what it looks like in real life and vicariously through stories and examples that have been shared with me within these communities. Discussing solidarity and collectivity resulted in many abstract conversations about what they are and how they functioned in these communities, so I produced some abstract definitions as I have come to understand how these terms operate in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil.

Solidarity is like a blanket that covers everyone. Even if you and your neighbor aren't the best of friends, it seems like there will always be someone to look out for you in some way. If your friends notice that you're having a rough time they will help out. Many characteristics may change over time, and it seems as if solidarity in these communities of Guayaquil has not been an exception. Living in the city is much different than living out in the country and those two lifestyles are at odds with each other. Some participants expressed pity over nostalgic memories of growing up in small towns with very close-knit friends and family all around. It's nearly impossible for ideas to have stayed the same. It may be a fact that solidarity has grown to be a bit more selfish in the city, but it's still there I saw it and many times I felt it through people taking time to make sure I was always safe and never hungry. I watched people come together to help a mother deal with the emotional and financial strain of losing a child. I watched people who work all week wake early up on weekends to participate in fundraisers for a children's group organization. Solidarity is still functioning to take care of people who need it the most.

If solidarity is a blanket, then collectivity is like a jacket people put on when they think it is necessary. Collectivity in the Afro-descendent communities of Guayaquil is very individualistic, even though the definition of the word focuses so much on the group aspect. People have to choose when to put their jacket on and who to stand with. I think that collectivity is obviously alive and has a function in Guayaquil. There are many Afro-Ecuadorian groups and organizations in Guayaquil, but I think collectivity without collaboration lessens the impact collectivity could have in these communities. From what I witnessed, it seemed like the collective groups operated individually and rarely collaborated with each other. This translated into people having to choose one group over another when each had an event on the same day. It also meant different groups working on the same agenda separately instead of doing it together.

In the following chapter, I will discuss one of the themes that became apparent as I analyzed my data. This theme and chapter focuses on how words can actually hurt you. As interviewees and survey participants shared their personal experiences with me, I noticed that many had shared experiences, which helped me delve into the following topic.

CHAPTER V

¡NEGRO! WHAT IF WORDS COULD HURT YOU

> *El negro es malo, no vale, el negro es un terror, lo peor; viene una nube negra, viene el gato negro, hay una mano negra, una oveja negra*. The black man is bad, he isn't worth anything, he's a terror, the worst; a black cloud is coming (bad weather), the black cat (bad luck), there's a black hand (there's corruption in the government), the black sheep (the family disgrace).
>
> -Mary, 49, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

This first quote exemplifies the issue that Afro-Ecuadorians have with the word "*negro,*" as you can see there's one bad connotation after another for the word "black," and unfortunately many people think this way when they see and or interact with Afro-Ecuadorians.

> "*Blanco corriendo atleta, negro corriendo ratero*. A white man running is an athlete; a black man running is a thief."

This second quote is a popular saying in South America and is based on a song written by an Afro-Colombian group *Grupo Niche* (Black Group). The song depicts attitudes of non-Afro-Latinos towards Afro-Latinos and in negative ways. An important aspect of the song is that even though disparaging comments are said to and about black people, they carry on (Grupo Niche 1999- Han Cogido la Cosa; A Golpe de Folklore).[4]

> "*La broma pesada: cogélo, cogélo, va robando*. The sick joke: catch him, catch him, he's stealing." -Tom, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

[4] The lyrics to the song are at the end of the dissertation located in Appendix A.

This final quote is derived the chorus of that same song and it has taken on a life of its own as a rude joke in Ecuador as exemplified by Tom in the third quote. It is directed towards any black/afro person they see running or walking too fast, and it is based on the frequent use of the second quote and the alternative fact that "black people are always stealing." It was explained to me that this joke only goes one way, and you would not hear anyone saying it to a mestizo person, (even though some mestizo people rob and steal from others). This is a sick joke, but if the conditions Afro-Ecuadorians faced were different, and they were not discriminated against, then maybe the joke would lose some of its sting. However, there has not been serious change and Afro-Ecuadorians have a loaded racial history filled with issues that began in the colonial period, trickled down through independence, and are still present today. These issues are products of Europeanized nation building which excluded black and brown people, and the ideologies of "*blanqueamiento"* (whitening) and "*mestizaje"* (racial-mixing).

In this chapter, I'll be reviewing the effects on the word *negro* on my survey participants and interviewees. This chapter has three main sections. I begin with a brief history of race and race relations in Afro-Latin America (including Ecuador). Then I discuss the ways the word "negro" has impacted Ecuadorian society and the Afro-Ecuadorians living in it; first, through battling stigmas, self-hate and then by illustrating the self-doubt Afro-Ecuadorians encounter in interactions with non-Afros. Lastly, I discuss the phenomenon of Afro-Ecuadorians learning about their blackness, accepting it and how this process was linked to an erasure of the idea of a mestizo nation by promoting a multinational and pluricultural one.

When Words Hurt

We all grew up saying the phrase, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Well the word *negro*, which means "black" in Spanish, has been able to do just that! When the Spanish conquered Latin America and enslaved millions of Africans, they changed their names, changed their religion, took away their humanity, and personified the word *negro* (and all the negative connotations and stigma it bore) making it the principle identifier for that group of people and their descendants who came after them. Whitten et al. provide interesting details about the word "negro" within and outside of the Afro-Ecuadorian community (Whitten et al. 1995). In addition to holding negative connotations, reproductions of the word in the forms of verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs have taken on negative meanings too. For example, "Negrear (to blacken) is used to socially confer lesser status. To say that someone's life is "negreando" can mean the person is drifting towards crime, is becoming poorer, or is heading towards states pejoratively associated with black people: lazy, dirty, or ugly," (Whitten et al. 1995, 299). We all know that "black" is just a word, and that people are not really "black." However, it is a word that has been employed by many literary artists throughout all ages to foreshadow not so pleasant events, to describe bad and/or evil people, places and things. In Latin America, "black" is not the thing people want to be, or be associated with, and the quote above highlights that sentiment.

Rahier's article highlights the fact that, years after the inclusion of Afro-Ecuadorians through the revision of the 1998 Constitution, anti-black racism still persists in Ecuadorian society. Rahier conducted a revision of popular and national newspapers and sports articles which produced results that racism is deeply intertwined into the fabric of Ecuadorian society and that racist remarks using terms like "*negro, moreno, de ébano*" (black, brown-skinned, but black, and ebony-colored) were regarded as normal and acceptable ways to refer to Afro-Ecuadorians (Rahier 2010, 35). One athlete,

a sprinter named Liliana Chalá, won five medals (three were gold); she was dubbed *la negra de oro* (the golden black woman/the black woman who got gold) in the 1980s. Another athlete, the soccer player Italo Estupiñan was called *el negro Italo Estupiñan* or *el gato salvaje* (the balck Italo Espiñan) and (the wild/savage cat) in the 1970s. Another soccer player, Néicer Reasco, who was selected to play on the 2006 national soccer team, was called *la gacela de la selección* (the gazelle of the selection) (Rahier 2010, 35). These nicknames and titles given to these Afro-Ecuadorians show how acceptable it was to animalize black athletes while congratulating them on their achievements at the same time. While similar tactics are used in the United States as well, it is done controversially, it is heavily criticized, and people condemn it. These ideas provide insight on aspects of the black experience in Ecuadorian and Latin American societies. The fact that it took a foreign scholar to highlight these macro aggressions as racist and problematic, prove that Afro-Ecuadorians as well as non-Afro-Ecuadorians were numb to the multi-facetedness of racism in their society.

Philip Lampe highlighted the fact that name-calling can be a type of "propaganda device where a particular word or phrase is used to place an object referred to into a category which elicits a desired attitude and/or behavior," (Lampe 1982, 542). We saw the dire effects of name-calling and negative propaganda in our history classes while we learned about fate of the Jewish people living in Nazi Germany. Maybe the Spanish did this by accident, but that is doubtful, and at least one participant in this project felt that it was part of a strategic plan, which he details below.

> "The black is the enemy. Calling them black was a strategy because the junk, the trash and everything that doesn't function is black. Another strategy, the Catholic Church declares that the Africans and their descendants are soulless beings and enemies of God. Another strategy they erase us from the historical memory so that we don't know the essence of our ancestry, and in that way, they disconnect us from

> productivity, and richness that our country enjoys; that the European countries were built with the tears, sweat and blood of the Africans and their descendants, but we are the poorest of the poor."
>
> –Ed, 57, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

These strategies have continued to wreak havoc and cause grief to Afro-Latinos everywhere, including Ecuador. The Spaniards put enslaved Africans and their descendants into a category that stripped away their humanity. Since they were considered sub-human and of low societal self-worth, by using the term "negro" they made sure (purposely or by accident) that once slavery ended, their descendants would be treated as third-class citizens on the bottom rung of the social ladder in Latin America. When does a name cease to just be a simple word? When it takes on a life of its own and when all of the negative connotations, perceptions, and stigma become internalized and personified.

Stigma is defined as "a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person," by the Oxford Dictionary, and according to Wang et al. "it occurs whenever devalued attributes are linked to a person or to membership in a group" (Wang et al. 2017, 75). In the United States, people who have gone to prison are negatively labeled and negatively perceived by most. This is probably due to the fact that in American society children are indoctrinated at an early age that people go to prison for doing something wrong, they broke a rule, a law, or they were in extreme violation of something. They are called names like criminals and jailbirds. In Latin America, the same type of stigma is prevalent, but another stigma exists as well, and it much to do with the term from above *negro*, and one's phenotype.

Imagine being refused a job because of your skin tone, and someone actually acknowledging your job refusal is because of your skin tone, "*Es bonitia la negrita pero no sirve*/ the little black girl is cute but can't work here" –Laura, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. That's what they

said about her as she dropped off her resume to work at a retail store, MiComisariato (much like the Wal-Mart's we have here) that was hiring. It is an aspect of life for individuals who deal with stigmas. It has been documented that one of the disadvantages experienced by such groups is economic hardship and Afro-Ecuadorians can attest to that (Crocker et al. 1991). This type of behavior once ran rampant in the United States, but times have changed and laws have been enacted to thwart such unjust actions (most of the time). This behavior is supposed to be illegal in Ecuador as well, but I did not meet anyone who has pressed charges nor did I meet anyone who knows someone who has pressed charges. The way their system is set up, one has to get a lawyer to press charges and this comes with a lot of legal fees that, if you are struggling with economic hardship, may be difficult to afford.

Another negative aspect of stigmas reflects on one's self-esteem for example, calling a child stupid for a prolonged amount of time could eventually lead to that child internalizing it and then underperforming in everything that they do. Wang et al. identify this phenomenon as part of the psychology of the stigmatized individual (Wang et al. 2017). Sometimes people begin to believe the stereotypes and names they call others as fact, but tragically the victims begin to believe them too. "Mestizos see blacks as thieves and because of the popularity of this image, even black people have begun to believe it too," –Tom, 31 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. Another participant added, "Here in Ecuador, they generalize, for example: If *one black person* robbed you, they say that *black people* will rob you. But I don't know if it's something internal that I have to get over or if it is not only in my mind," –Megan, 36, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

Self-Doubting Afro Because Of "Negro"

Steele and Aronson discovered through their study that highlighting negative stereotypes about the intelligence of black people had a negative impact on standardized test scores (1995).

These negative effects aren't restricted to race because in a similar study Stone et. al showed that white people perform worse on athletic tasks when negative stereotypes about them are highlighted (1999). Just like the child, people subjected to stigmas, negative stereotypes and name-calling have negative effects on them, and even if they don't outwardly express it, the damage is there in their psyche, swirling around and producing self-doubt. Two participants shared their experiences with this phenomenon,

> "I was walking on the street 9th of October and a girl was walking ahead of me, I don't know, she saw me, and it was clear that she walked faster as if she thought that I was going to do something to her… *I don't know*…"
>
> –Luke, 22, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

How would you feel having to rethink every situation where you encountered someone of a different race, having to re-trace your steps to make sure that you didn't do anything wrong? Doubting yourself about something that really happened has to be one of the most irritating and mind-taxing thing you could do in a day but imagine doing it all the time. For many Afro-Ecuadorians that self-doubt makes them feel as though they are the ones doing something wrong. When a black person thinks that someone is being racist, the Ecuadorian society it makes him or her seem like the racist.

> "When I go to the street to exercise and I go run, I run through white areas like this (we were in a whiter neighborhood) and I perceive… I'm not sure if it's me, but you feel like they don't trust you, like you're going to do something to them.
>
> –Megan, 36, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

The stigma compounded with the racism and the discrimination towards this community is so thick and twisted that black people automatically assume, when they think about what they are

experiencing, that something must be wrong with them. And they do it in such a way that makes them doubt themselves. Another participant thought it was clear that something was affecting Afro-Ecuadorians, "An inferiority complex still exists amongst Afro-Ecuadorians,"-Tom, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. This may very well be the result of being exposed to centuries of being the stigmatized group in a Latin American society.

Racial slurs can be just as detrimental to one's psyche as the negative stereotypes, which have been ingrained into a society towards a certain group of people. Wang et al highlighted "both the discriminatory and internalized disadvantages of stigma are reinforced through derogatory group labels and slurs" (2017, 76). There is one slur that is heard very often in Spanish-speaking countries where Afro-descendants can be found: *negrito* (little/insignificant black man). I was living in central Mexico the very first time I heard a form the word *negrito*, some men shouted out to me "*Oye negrita*," which literally means "Hey little black girl," but could figuratively be a cat-call such as, "Hey sweetheart, mamma, baby ect." However, I took every word literally on my first visit to Mexico, as I was still learning the language, and although they might not have meant anything negative by trying to get my attention, I did not know those men and I was taken aback. The word sounded too much like the N-word that I was familiar with, growing up in the United States. "*Negrito*" is the diminutive form of the word "*negro"* or black. A diminutive is an adjective that means "extremely or unusually small, and can imply smallness, a token of affection or scorn." There are many people who use the term as a form of endearment, but if you are black and living in Latin America, it is most often a slur, just like the N-word in the states. When it is used within the group it is not typically a big deal. However, if someone from outside of the group uses the term, it could be problematic, like the N-word. Abby, an interviewee, highlighted this with an anecdote: she was at lunch once with a mestizo colleague who referred to an afro-lawyer who worked in the same office

as, *el negrito allí en frente* (the little black man there in front). Albeit shocking, many Ecuadorians are talked about in this manner behind their backs and to their faces. In addition to being a slur and disrespectful, it is an overt form of racism and discrimination, which is a daily occurrence in the life of an Afro-Ecuadorian.

> "When someone discriminates against an afro-descendant, it affects everyone. When a reporter, or commentator says on the television, "Black people have two abilities: one is selling 'coco or mani' and the other is kicking the [soccer] ball."
>
> –Ed, 57 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Most Afro-Ecuadorians understand that even in 2018 the cards are stacked against them. Many face racism and discrimination as soon as they leave their homes, walk the streets, or board public transportation. Ed shared with me that,

> "All afro-descendants react when we feel racially discriminated against. But when we are more or less accustomed (numb) to the system we do not feel that we are discriminated against and that is a problem."

Another participant shared his point of view with me,

> "We afros do not have the same opportunities that the majority has, we are limited. When we go to stores, security guards are always behind us, or if we are out in the street with a girl that is not afro, people stare and point at us, but if we are with an afro girl nothing happens,"
>
> –Robert, 33, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

It was his experience that mixed couples were frowned upon in Guayaquil, and it didn't matter if it was an afro man with a mestiza woman or an afro woman with a mestizo man. He might have a point because walking around publically displaying your affection is different from keeping it

hidden at home. However, I met many people who spoke about miscegenation and interracial dating in a positive light. There are afro-descendant mothers living in Ecuador and other areas in Latin America today who don't want their children dating/marrying other afros… "They aren't racist but they don't want their sons going out with other afro-descendant people. It's better that they go out with the mestizas so they can better the race (*mejorar la raza)*." -Laura, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

Afro-Ecuadorian women are not blind to the centrality of race or the stigma they wear with their phenotype. One of Jean Rahier's interviewees, Yesenya, recounts the memories of a crush (who was black) and how she imagined marrying him, but then she dismissed the idea thinking, "We will get very dark kids, and I don't want that, I want to improve my race (mejorar la raza)." Then she explained that she didn't think her race was bad, but had she married him, they would have had dark kids, she exclaimed, "…That is ugly. My color is beautiful for me, but just for me, not for my kids. I'm proud of being black but not for my kids. I don't take dark kids into my arms. I don't like them," (Rahier 2003:13). Yesenya has twins who are mixed (their father is European) and light-skinned with "good," curly hair. This conversation clearly demonstrates that the stigmatization of being black is such a serious issue that some blacks in Latin America consciously look to lighten their progeny. This woman from the interview even shows signs of internal racism and issues with colorism. Her case may not be representative of the whole population, but I have heard that phrase "*mejorar la raza /improve the race*" many times in Ecuador. Also, I have personally had conversations with Afro-Ecuadorian men and women who support the idea of intergenerational whitening (mejorar la raza), by choosing a lighter/whiter-skinned mate in order to have lighter/whiter offspring. At times, is unfortunate and it speaks volumes about the struggles and issues

black people have had to face. At other times, it seems as though people might use intergenerational whitening as a way to get around a system infused with racism and racial inequality.

Being black in Latin America is hard, and Ecuador is not an exception. I don't think mothers and fathers believe in "*mejorar la raza"* as a form of self-hate but more as a coping mechanism. Race is so fluid throughout Latin America, that you can essentially negate your blackness, if you look the part. Scholars on race in Latin America have demonstrated that "there is a continuum of racial categories and often people who look quite African in appearance will be identified as black; people of evidently more mixed ancestry will often be classed by a variety of terms denoting a position between black and white," (Wade 1997: 13). Or if they have sufficient funds, which is what Golash-Boza researched that included the types of whitening that generally effect Afro-Latinos: intergenerational whitening, which occurs when a white and a black pair produce offspring; and social whitening which, occurs when a person is born black but over time accumulates enough wealth or social status to be considered white or whiter in certain situations (2010:141). This coping mechanism is meant to deal with the stigma of being black or afro in Latin America. So, these parents are trying to prevent their grandchildren from dealing with all of the negativity and horrible experiences they lived. If that is the case, then it makes me wonder why the parents who tell their children to "*mejorar la raza*" didn't take their own advice. I have two theories, that old telltale "do as I say not as I do" bit or a lack in availability. Maybe they didn't live in an era or area that permitted them to do so. I understand this sentiment 10 years ago, and I really understand how much of a difference it could make in someone's life 20 years ago, but this phrase was prevalent in 2012 when I conducted preliminary research and in 2014 during my field research, so will it ever end?

Learning Blackness

I met many people who talked about "learning they were black." At first it used to catch me off-guard, but as I met more participants a pattern immerged and it was evident that race wasn't really addressed in their households. This might have occurred for two reasons: one, you are raised by people who look like you and two, you grow up in areas where people look like you, until you reach school age and attend a mixed school. Abby, like many migrants, first felt their blackness living in Guayaquil. It was especially bad if they went to a mixed school, mestizos treated them badly and would refuse to sit next to them. In the United States, there were laws of hypo-descent, like the infamous "One Drop Rule." This law stipulates that a child of mix-race parentage is assigned the same race of the parent deemed subordinate in that society. During that time in the Unites States, that meant if you were mixed and you had a white and black parent then your birth certificate would say you were black. There was no grey area in U.S. American society unless you looked light enough to pass for non-black.

One participant first realized he was black when his parents (a mestizo father and a black mother) split up and he and his brother had to stay with his mother's family in a "blacker" neighborhood. Before he used to negate his blackness, but when he moved to the new neighborhood, he was confronted with it every day, sometimes in a positive way but other times were not as positive. He talked about someone trying to "*blackar*" him a term I had never heard before, but a term that seemed all too normal when speaking about black experiences in Latin America. *Blackar* sounds like and looks like the word "black" and in the context that he used this word, it translated to "someone was trying to treat him like a black [person]." That phrase sounds like the definition of a term I've heard Mexicans say, "*negrear*" along with the phrase "*no me negrées*," or "don't treat me like a black," colloquially. The Real Academia Española defines it similarly; "2: to become black, 6:

to exploit, to abusively use a worker, 7: to undervalue," (RAE 5/4/17-http://dle.rae.es/?id=QMbkC7J). Again, as you will recall, the term *negro* in Latin America was stigmatized and still is, even presently. No one wanted to be associated with the term. Then he followed up with an additional description of the term, "*hacer sentirse menos a uno"* or "to make one feel less [of a person]." -Tom, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

The want of feeling like you belong is a part of human nature; after all we are social beings. Being able to claim a group of people as your own is something that everyone does. For example, in school (at all levels) like-minded people tend to bond together and see life through similar lenses, and since they feel like they are a part of "their group" it makes them seem more confident. Then we have seen sports fans come together. The Cavaliers winning the NBA championship resulted in the 2016 parade in Cleveland, OH that brought over a million people together from all walks of life. Even if it only lasted for a couple of hours those people were connected together over something as trivial as a basketball team winning a championship. People also protest together. Generally, everyone has groups and cliques in many areas of their lives where they feel they are a part of something.

Afro-Ecuadorians are not different. When I constructed the survey for this project, I wondered how people identified themselves? Recalling all the issues surrounding the term "*negro,*" I wondered, if people identified themselves with different terms, would that make it harder for them to identify with one specific group? I thought that maybe labeling had an impact on participation. If people didn't see themselves as "*x,*" why would they bother to get involved with people focused on issues concerning "*x?*" At one point in time, Brazilians used 134 terms to self-identify based on their skin color (1976 Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)). Now hypothetically speaking, if people bonded together just because they looked alike, that would have meant that there

were at least 134 groups to choose from. So, how difficult would it have been to unite so many groups of people? I know that people don't only worry about resemblance in their group, but perhaps it could play a factor.

I asked survey participants how they identified themselves **without** providing a list of terms for them to choose from, and most chose to answer with one-word identifiers. There were only five instances where people chose two words to self-identify. Here's a list of terms the survey participants used to identify themselves and how often that term was used by the survey population:

Table 2. List of terms Afro-Ecuadorians used to describe themselves.

#	Term	Frequency
1	Afroecuatoriano	24
2	Afroecuatoriana	28
3	Afrodescendiente	16
4	Negro	33
5	Negra	7
6	Afro	25
7	Mestizo	2
8	Mestiza	4
9	Mestiza/afrodescendiente	1
10	Moreno	1
11	Mulato	1
12	Niche	1

Table 2. Continued

13	Negro/Afro	1
14	Afroecuatoriano/Afrodescendiente	1
15	Afro/Negra	1
16	Ser humano-afrodescendiente	1
17	Africano	1
18	Costeño	1

In 2001 there was a national census where the term *negro,* was used as a self-identifying term for the first time (Johnson 2012). However, there was a total of 18 terms people used to identify themselves both ethnically/racially and nationally within this survey population. As you can see, the most popular terms were *Afro-Ecuadorian, Negro (Black), Afro, and Afro-descendant*. I was surprised to see the term *negro* be so popular given the stigma and negative connotation that this term typically carries with it throughout Latin America. The primary language in Ecuador is Spanish. In Spanish, there are gendered adjectives and nouns, and a clear example for this is provided in the terms *Afroecuatoriano* and *Afroecuatoriana*, which both mean Afro-Ecuadorian. The term Afro-Ecuadorian is the newest term on the list, and it first made its appearance in the 2008 revision of the Ecuadorian Constitution. This revision has been the most inclusionary version ever, defining the Republic as *plurinacional* (plurinational) then stating in Chapter 4, Article 56: *"Indigenous communities, peoples and nations, the Afro-Ecuadorian people, the back-country*

people (montubios) of the inland costal region and communes are a part of the single and indivisible Ecuadorian State." (Ecuadorian Constitution rev. 2008).

Many afros associated with political agendas and social movement groups pushed it as a term people should use because of its seemingly inclusive appeal, and as the perfect census tool (without the negative connotations) to be able to determine exactly how many afro-descendant people actually live in Ecuador. The term Afro-Ecuadorian encompasses one's ancestry and their present, in the fact that they are both Afro-descendant and proud Ecuadorians. Surprisingly there was only one individual who self-identified with the term "*Moreno,"* which means "brown." *Moreno* and its diminutive *morenito* are adjectives used many times by mestizo people (and sometimes Afro-Ecuadorians) to describe black people. However, many of the survey participants vehemently responded to that term saying, "*Moreno es un apellido*," (Moreno is a last name), and many shared that mestizos would use the diminutive term *morenito* to disrespect them and other Afro-Ecuadorians. *Afro-Ecuadorian* is the term most associated with nationality and inclusivity, while *Black, Afro-descendant*, and *Afro* are terms more associated with race and ethnicity. Within this population, 39% of the people who used these top terms identified most with Afro-Ecuadorian, and 61% identified more with the racial/ethnic terms: *Black, Afro*, and *Afro-Descendant*. Looking closely at the population, the greatest number of women who participated in organizations and groups identified more with the terms associated with race/ethnicity (71%), while the other 29% preferred the term Afro-Ecuadorian (see Appendix 6).

Comparing the men participants, 50% preferred the racial/ethnic terms and 40% preferred the term Afro-Ecuadorian. Non-participant women self-identified the most with the term Afro-Ecuadorian, 50%, while only 37% used the terms associated with race/ethnicity. The fact that so many women were reluctant to identify with the racial/ethnic terms could possibly be a factor that

prohibits them from participating with Afro-Ecuadorian organizations and groups. If groups did not use the same terminology that these women used to describe themselves, maybe that kept them away. If they felt as though they could not relate to the group based on the name, then that would eliminate them from possibly becoming participants before they were even able to speak with a representative of the group or organization. Non-participant men show the exact opposite of non-participant women, 67% of the men self-identify with terms associated with race/ethnicity while 25% of them preferred the term Afro-Ecuadorian.

Since Afro-Ecuadorian was the "newest" term on the list, I wondered if education level mattered. I thought that perhaps the more educated someone was, then they might prefer to use the newest term. It turned out that Afro-Ecuadorian was the most popular term at all levels of education: 49% of university graduates preferred it, 31% of high school graduates preferred it, and 44% of those with a primary education chose this term. In a separate question, asked the survey participants of the three terms: *Negro, Afro-Ecuadorian* and *Afro-Descendant*, nearly 60% (58%) chose *Afro-Ecuadorian*, 33% chose *Negro* and only 4% chose *Afro-descendant*. So it looks as though pushing the term has been very successful, especially within this survey population.

In the United States, "*black*" is not as offensive a term to *most* people (it still might offend some people). It may have a lot to do with the fact that Black people began to self-label and latch on to the word as a form of self-pride. In the 1960's there was a Black Power movement that pushed a "Black is Beautiful" mantra, which many people grabbed a hold of and never let go. In a past study that Lampe conducted on ethnic labels in the U.S. (in San Antonio), he noted that there was a huge difference between the words "*Negro*" and "*Black*" for Whites and Mexican Americans. For these two groups, "*Black*" was more associated with danger and gang violence, while the "*Negro*" was less threatening and less dangerous. Lampe attributes these reactions to the fact that "Negroes had an

assigned name and place in society, a place which was second-class and noncompetitive," (Lampe 1982: 546). He received the opposite reaction with the black participants in this study as "*negro*" elicited more of a negative response than the word "*black.*" According to Lampe's study, "*black*" was a term that was self-selected and it conveyed a sense of pride of their heritage. Sociologist Alphonso Pinkney stated that the word *negro* "was a term which was invented by white people to apply to black people in the United States; consequently, the black community increasingly disapproved of its use and increasingly preferred the term black because it wasn't designated by white people" (Pinkney 1969, xiii-xiv).[5]

After interviewing and surveying the participants, it was clear that "*negro*" is a word that still hurts many people and influences many others in a very negative way. As one participant put it, "They didn't choose to be called black, it was forced on them." –Paul, 38, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. If I were to compare this study with the study Lampe conducted, it would be accurate to claim that "*negro"* for Afro-Latin Americans and Afro-Ecuadorians is the "*Negro(e)"* for African-Americans living in the U.S., or at least it used to be. In this day in age, it might be more accurate to say that "Black" is the new "Negro(e)" and African-American is our own version of Afro-Ecuadorian, inclusive and prideful. Name-calling, stereotypes, slurs and the stigmas attached to them can do real damage, as we've seen in the testimonies above. Perhaps Afro-Ecuadorians are on their way to making it better for themselves and their society by selecting their own name.

After centuries of damning societal politics geared towards exclusion and hatred of people who look like you, how would you feel? This chapter focused on how Afro-Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil navigated their blackness. It has highlighted personal experiences, which have been both

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[5] It should be noted that this sentiment is not shared by 100% of African-Americans living in the United States, as some believe the term "*black*" was also imposed.

positive (producing self-pride and pride in one's heritage) and negative (creating self-doubt). It has also showed us the effects of living in a stigmatized group, where the identifier is your skin color, and not easily hidden. It hasn't been easy, but fortunately Afro-Ecuadorians are a resilient group who refuse to give up, even when the system is against them.

The next chapter focuses on the history of Afro-Ecuadorian participation and mobilization. It also highlights questions and answers from the survey. Again, the point of the survey was an attempt to uncover the factors that either promoted participation in an Afro-Ecuadorian NGO in Guayaquil with the hope of identifying straightforward answers. Identifying such answers could be key to a successful Afro-Ecuadorian movement as well as provide a platform for other minority groups fighting for equality.

CHAPTER VI

AFRO-ECUADORIAN PARTICIPATION

Afro-Ecuadorian Participation and Mobilization

In this chapter, I discuss the history of Afro-Ecuadorian participation and mobilization in Ecuador. The earliest moments arguably begin when the enslaved Africans and their descendants escaping slavery at the onset of Spanish Colonialism. However, there is also a great deal of information about what happened in the late 1970s through the 2000s. After the history portion, I discuss the factors that some scholars have indicated negatively impact Afro-Descendant participation and mobilization. After this section, I review the data I collected from the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil.

Norman Whitten, Diego Quiroga and Rafael Savoia provide an insightful look into the history of Afro-Ecuadorians in their country. They highlighted the historical areas of blackness in Esmeraldas (in the north), Loja (in the Amazonian south), and Carchi and Imbaburra (in the central mountainous region). These areas are significant because they delineate where Afro-Ecuadorians were enslaved, where they rebelled, where some participated in manumission, and where they were eventually liberated from slavery when it was abolished. By the late 1990s, half of Loja's Afro-Ecuadorian population had declined, and it was much lower than the populations of Esmeraldas and the Chota-Mira Valley. The authors note that out-migration from Esmeraldas, the Chota-Mira Valley resulted in Afro-Ecuadorian population increases in Quito and Guayaquil, where there was already an Afro-Ecuadorian presence, as well as in Ibarra (Whitten et al. 1995). Areas in Quito that were associated with having a black presence were: Batallon del Pueblo, Bastion Popular, Anticucho, Roldos, Carapungo (a neighborhood I visited in 2012), and Comité del Pueblo.

More Afro-Ecuadorians had migrated to Guayaquil, which made Guayaquil the new home of the largest Afro-Ecuadorian population in the nation (INEC 2012). Cristo da Consuelo was the most-heavily populated Afro-Ecuadorian neighborhood, but La Chala and La Marimba were also popular Afro-Ecuadorian neighborhoods (Whitten et al. 1995). Guayaquil has obviously continued to grow since this article's publication, but it is interesting to note that Cristo de Consuelo was one of the neighborhoods named the most united barrios in Guayaquil by my survey participants, nearly twenty years after that article's publication.

Whitten et al. highlight that ASONE (Asociación de Negros del Ecuador/ Black Ecuadorian Associate) was one of the first Afro-Ecuadorian organizations created, and it had members from all over the republic, Guayaquil, Quito, Ibarra, Loja, the Chota-Mira Valley and Esmeraldas (1995). This organization focused on rescuing national dignity, "the movement is black nationalist, and nation-state nationalist. It seeks to minimize the Spanish yolk that has held black, indigenous and other peoples in check for half a millennium. It seeks modernization of the economy while maintaining the skills of subsistence," (Whitten et al. 1995, 308). These authors also stated that, "racist barriers truncate movements and localize them. Difficulties with access to funds for ideological and social mobilization for black people are many, which contrasts greatly to the pools of international money available to indigenous people," (Whitten et al. 1995, 312-313).

According to Whitten et al., there are three areas limiting affirmative blackness in Ecuador. First of all, there needs to be a "globalization of interest and concern; secondly, serious research in Afro-Latin American communities is needed. A call for serious studies in communities to see what a *comunidad negra* (black community) is in the late twentieth and twenty-first century is essential. The world needs to know how people live, what they say, what they feel and seek in life and after-life," (Whitten et al. 1995, 313). They also believe that creating access to opportunities will allow

Afro-Latinos greater chances of obtaining formal and higher education so that they can create studies and focus on topics that are significant and important to their communities. My research aligns with many of the areas Whitten et al. have mentioned as necessary. By selecting Guayaquil as a research site, living there and being engaged in participant observation, I was able to witness what they experience, and conducting interviews and surveys, I was able to give them a platform so that their vices could be heard and acknowledged. This project offers insight into the lives and communities of Afro-Latinos in Ecuador, and shows how they live, as well as what they are passionate about, and it does so in such a way that it can be shared with others.

Halpern and Twine state that San Lorenzo, Esmeraldas, was the home of the growing black movement, *El Proceso de Comunidades Negras* (the Advancement of Black Communities) (2000, 23). This organization brought black grassroots leaders from San Lorenzo and Eloy Alfaro together. This movement aimed to address the marginalization of Afro-Ecuadorians, but it was linked to other indigenous groups, like CONAIE. El Proceso was able to receive funding from two international organizations, *American Friends Service Committee* and *CARE*, but there has not been a great increase in international awareness or visibility for their endeavor.

In 2007 Anton Sanchez noted that the biggest challenge to Afro-Ecuadorians was the fight against discrimination, racism and inequality; mobilization in Ecuador has been difficult due to the complexity of identity conflicts, personal and group conflicts. I was able to conduct research in 2012 and 2014 in Ecuador, and from what I hear from friends and contacts in Ecuador; they continue to be issues. Despite, or because of these conflicting issues, there are a lot of organizations focusing on varying topics concerning, "urban, rural, juvenile, academic, gender, reproductive and political issues,' (Anton Sanchez 2007, 236). Anton Sanchez notes that many of these organizations were influenced by, "movements from African-American communities in the United States, as well as the

Pan-African movements from the late 1950s-60s on the African continent against European powers. These pro-black movements helped develop a global conversation about fighting racial discrimination, segregation, ethnic intolerance, European colonization in Africa and liberating the African diaspora around the world" (Anton Sanchez 2007, 236).

In the 1970s young intellectuals, many of who attended the Universidad Central in Quito, and who were influenced by Marxism and Pan-African literature decided to create the *Centro de Estudios Afroecuatoriano* (CEA) (Afro-Ecuadorian Studies Center) in Quito (Anton Sanchez 2009 and Johnson 2012). Johnson identifies the Afro-Ecuadorian Studies Center as the first Afro-Ecuadorian NGO (2012). The main purpose of the center was to provide a space to analyze issues concerning African and Afro-American people around the world. They also focused on collecting oral histories from elder Afro-Ecuadorians and documenting their experiences and traditions (Johnson 2012). The CEA was legally recognized in the early 1980s. Some of the CEA's participants would become well known Afro-Ecuadorian activists, Juan Garcia, a scholar and a poet; Andres Jurado, a historian; and Oscar Chalá, an anthropologist, just to name a few (Johnson 2012, 182).

The formation of the *Congreso de Cultura Negra de las Americas* in Cali, Colombia in 1977 stands out as the first meeting of its kind that united Afro-Latinos. In the 1980s the Afro-Ecuadorian organizational process begins to experience a lack in participation and became weakened. Anton Sanchez explained that many Afro-Ecuadorians believed interactions from the Catholic Church's initiative to evangelize to Afro-Ecuadorians (2009).

Early resistance claims have insisted that, "resistance in Ecuador on the part of members of the African diaspora is as old as their presence is," and this could be proved by records of Cimarron territories, treaties and slave revolts (Rahier 2012, 214). Rahier states that "Afro-Ecuadorian

organizing prior to the 1970s was mainly focused on specific local issues rather that national ones," (Rahier 2012, 214). There seems to be a consensus of Afro-Ecuadorians, in their fifties and older, who mark the beginning of the Afro-Ecuadorian movement, and Afro-Ecuadorian participation, in the late 1970s with the Afro-Ecuadorian delegation which attended and participated with the "*Primer Congreso de la Cultura Negra de las Americas*/First Conference on Black Culture of the Americas" which was held in Cali, Colombia in August of 1977. The conference was organized by the *Fundación Colombiana de Investigaciones Folcloricas* (FCIP), the *Asociación Central de la Joventud Negra Peruana*, and the *Centro de Estudios Afro-Colombianos* (Rahier 2012, 203). Since participation in the First Conference on Black Culture of the Americas, Afro-Ecuadorians have formed groups at the local, provincial and national level, and these groups have and continue to affirm their racial identity, strengthen their cultural legacy, fight for their rights as citizens and more (Johnson 2012, 177). And according to Johnson, recent Afro-Ecuadorian activism has been described as an "emerging social movement in recognition of the creation of new organizations and the modest protests these organizations have mounted," (Johnson 2012, 177).

In 1981 Combonian missionaries created the *Movimiento Afroecuatoriano Conciencia* (MAEC), and then they created the *Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano* (CCA) (Afro-Ecuadorian Cultural Center). Their main goal was to organize Afro-Ecuadorian populations in Quito, Guayaquil and Esmeraldas. I was able to visit the centers in Quito and Guayaquil. Johnson stated that the CEA and CCA were at odds with each other, specifically, activists from the CEA argued that the CCA borrowed ideas and materials from the CEA in order to create the CCA. This tension produced feelings that "the CCA and other institutions of the Catholic Church often have a paternalistic structure in which white Europeans have ultimate power, and black Ecuadorians are simple

employees in projects and programs that operate in the name of up-lifting black Ecuadorians" (Johnson 2012, 183).

While this may have been a popular sentiment at some point during the existence of the CCA and other Catholic institutions, I personally witnessed more Afro-Ecuadorian community members from various neighborhoods come together and collaborate on projects with the CCA. One project that came from a successful collaborative effort, was the Afro-Ecuadorian mass that took place in October 2014. The people working at the Guayaquil CCA were Afro-descendant and the priest in charge was from the African country of Bangui, Central African Republic. During my visit, I saw that the CCA served as a physical space for meetings and gatherings for young adults as well as grown-ups. Nonetheless, Johnson mentions that the negative sentiment for the Church's involvement would be the cause of "future difficulties with creating and sustaining independent black institutions," (Johnson 2012, 183).

Juan Garcia is one of the most recognized activists and leaders for ethno-education in Ecuador. In an effort to share what he has collected over the years from Afro-Ecuadorian elders from communities like Esmeraldas, Garcia partnered with Catherine Walsh, a cultural studies professor at the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar for the creation of the Afro-Andean Documentary Fund. Their mission's primary focus was to "preserve, catalog and share Afro-Ecuadorian historical, cultural and educational experiences. The books, documents, teaching guides, and other materials the fund has produced are creating the foundation for what they hope will be the eventual full inclusion of the black experience into all levels of Ecuadorian education" (Johnson 2012, 185).

In the 1990s Afro-Ecuadorians were influenced by the Afro-Colombian movement, one organization in particular, the *Proceso de Comunidades Negras* (PCN), was extremely instrumental in connecting leaders from Afro-Ecuadorian and Afro-Colombian communities (Anton Sanchez

2009). The PCN created a space for discourse on collective rights, land rights, ethnic educations, as well as spaces for participation. During this period of participation, Afro-Ecuadorians were formally recognized in the Ecuadorian Constitution (1998) and some Afro-Ecuadorian communities were granted certain collective rights (Anton Sanchez 2009, 5). The *Primer Congreso Unitario del Pueblo Negro* (First Unitarian Conference of the Black Community) occurred in March 1999, and people at this conference developed the *Confederación Nacional Afroecuatoriana (CNA)* (National Afro-Ecuadorian Confederation), which connected hundreds of first and second tier organizations (Anton Sanchez). This was a true collaborative effort as leaders from the city of Esmeraldas and the provinces of Carchi, Ibambura, and Pinchincha contributed to making the CNA strong (Anton Sanchez 2009). Other national groups formed in the late 1990s are the National Coordination of Black Groups in Ecuador, the Association of Black Organizations of Ecuador (ASONE), and the National Coordinator, which was created to be "a mechanism for black groups to communicate with each other, share information and develop a national black presence" (Johnson 2012, 188). ASONE was labeled as a militant group that focused on protesting against racism and racial discrimination as well as promoting economic development projects. According to Johnson, ASONE was much more politically active, and some people hoped it would evolve into a political party, but that did not happen (Johnson 2012). At the time of this article's publication, there were at least 317 verified Afro-Ecuadorian organizations throughout the provinces of Esmeraldas, Guayas, Pinchincha, and the Chota-Mira Valley, and a large percentage of these organizations' locations correspond with the near 70% of the Afro-Ecuadorian communities in cities" (Anton Sanchez 2009).

Afro-Ecuadorian women also have a history of mobilizing in Ecuador, which began in the late 1990s. Groups formed in Esmeraldas, Quito and Guayaquil, they were focused on addressing economic, health, and social problems that plagued Afro-Ecuadorian communities and families, they

also fought issues of alcoholism, domestic violence, sexual abuse, poverty, unemployment and racial discrimination (Johnson 2012). The *Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Negras del Ecuador (CONAMUNE)* (National Coordinator of Ecuadorian Black Women) was created at the *Primer Congreso de Mujeres Negras* (First Black Women's Conference) in September of 1999 (Anton Sanchez 2009). The goal of CONAMUNE was to "incorporate Afro-Ecuadorian women in the claims for collective rights, and focus on a political agenda, which included training, development and participation, the capacity for development in certain areas of production, culture and social traditions" (Anton Sanchez 2009, 237-238). Another successful organization was the Black Women's Movement of Quito (MOMUNE-YEMANYA), and even though it was based in Quito, they were able to hold conferences and meetings all across the nation. Unfortunately, by the early 2000s participation in this organization began to decline, and so did its effectiveness in the Afro-Ecuadorian community (Johnson 2012).

This seems to be a trend with many Afro-Ecuadorian organizations. First, they have great enthusiastic starts, but over time dwindling levels of participation and limited resources convert these organizations in to what Johnson calls "paper organizations" (2009, 192). Paper organizations continue their existence on paper and are rarely active or able to support the community.

Afro-Ecuadorians have participated in various international conferences and meetings. One very important meeting was the Continental Seminar on Racism and Xenophobia in 1994, which resulted in the creation of the *Red de Organizaciones Afroamericanas* (Network of Afro-American Organizations), as a transnational strategy to take a stand against racism, discrimination, racial inequality and poverty. Another important meeting was the 3rd World Summit on Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Xenophobia, in Durban, South Africa in 2001, it was held in high esteem by the United Nations. Three important international organizations were established at the Summit: *La*

Alianza Estratégica Latinoamericana (Latin American Strategic Alliance), *El Proceso Afro-America XXI* (21st Century Afro-American Development), and *Initiativa Global Afro Latina y Caribeña* GALACI (Global Afro-Latino and Afro-Caribbean Initiative) (Anton Sanchez 2009, 238).

Despite all that has happened in the past, scholar Ollie Johnson III argues that Afro-Ecuadorians "have not been successful in creating a strong national social movement or in mobilizing adequate resources (material and human) to give themselves substantial organizational autonomy or political power" (Johnson 2012, 177). I have also heard similar sentiment from my survey participants, some of whom were people actively engaged with Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs.

The Corporation for the Afro-Ecuadorian Development (CODAE) was one of the state's corporatist institutions. It was created in 2004 as an "organization subjected to public law that is decentralized and integrated by representatives of the central government and by delegates from the Afro-Ecuadorian community so that it can contribute to the planning of public policies for the Afro-Ecuadorian people," (Rahier 2012, 207). Rahier mentions that the CODAE has a past speckled with issues, like corrupt officials (2012, 207-208), but its past role of focusing on Afro-Ecuadorian communities has been changing. During a 2014 interview with a CODAE representative in Guayaquil, I learned that CODAE was no longer focusing on just helping Afro-Ecuadorians, but it was shifting gears to help all minority groups in Ecuador.

Katherine Walsh is a scholar who has focused on Afro-Ecuadorian culture and mobilization. In a recent article, she discusses affirmative action, how it functions and what it looks like in South America, but there is also a specific focus on Ecuador (Walsh 2015). She acknowledges that affirmative action, "is the result of the demands and struggles of both indigenous and Afro-Latino movements for racial and ethnic recognition, reparation, equity, rights and social inclusion" (Walsh 2015, 20). She also argues that affirmative action plans are "newer" in South America, despite the

fact that the 1990s were full of new multicultural constitutions, and she notes that "Ecuador is the only nation in the region and possibly the world that explicitly names affirmative action, racism, on-going colonialism and restorative reparation- and their interrelation- in its 2008 constitution" (Walsh 2015, 21).

Another country, Venezuela, which has the third largest population of Afro-Latinos, established 36 embassies in African nations lead by Afro-Venezuelans, so that they could "establish cultural, political and economic ties and reconstruct, in the present, the legacies of forced diaspora that historically link these two regions" (Walsh 2015, 27). Not many countries have been as willing to push affirmative action plans on such a scale where they go beyond focusing on the citizens in their countries to help other citizens in the "homelands" of their Afro-descendants. Ecuador has the fourth largest Afro-descendant population in South America. Although the 1998 constitution did recognize the presence of Afro-Ecuadorians in the nation, it did not do much to combat structural racism, or change the day-to-day lives of their minority group citizens, but Walsh argues that it did weaken and limit the political capabilities of both Afro-Ecuadorian and indigenous movements by partnering them with the global state project (Walsh 2015).

Despite article 416:5 in the 2008 Constitution's call to affirmative action by extending Afro-Ecuadorians certain collective rights such as,

> "the right to maintain, develop, and freely strengthen the Afro-Ecuadorian identity, sense of being, sense of belonging, ancestral traditions, and forms of social organizations; to not be the object of racism nor any type of discrimination based on origin or ethnic or cultural identity; and the recognition, reparation, and repayment of those groups affected by racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance and discrimination," (Walsh 2015, 28)

Afro-Ecuadorians and other minorities still face racism and racial discrimination, which has had negative impacts on their lives. In an attempt to withhold the rights extended in the constitution and to help minorities economically, President Rafael Correa passed the Presidential Decree 60 in 2009. It required the adoption of a quota system in the areas of labor and education. However, the results of this decree are in a grey area. While I conducted research, I did not find anyone, nor did I hear of anyone who had benefited from this decree, many people who were not active in any Afro-Ecuadorian NGO had never even heard of the decree.

This decree calls for the national application of affirmative action and the Plurinational Plan to Eliminate Racial Discrimination and Cultural-Ethnic Exclusion as public policy, the ruling of 365 Days Against Racism and Discrimination, a labor policy of quotas, and a system of merits in the public sphere. It also calls for the inclusion of Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples in the public naming of streets, monuments, parks, and national buildings. Walsh attests that some "application has occurred in the public sphere, diplomatic posts, university enrollment went up," however after the onset of implementation, evaluations showed the impact to be minimal, which might account for the information I collected while I conducted my research (Walsh 2015, 29). The lack in implementation prompted a march of over 300 Afro-Ecuadorian leaders from 18 different organizations in April 2012. This march, "The March for Dignity and Life" began in Esmeraldas and ended at the presidential palace in Quito, over 300km (over 186 miles) (Walsh 2015, 30).

Factors Impacting Participation

NGOs are designed to empower local communities by "people-centered participatory processes as well as through building the capacity of local people," (Morgan 2016, 175). Participation can be defined in many ways with varying levels. For the confines of my study, when I asked survey participants about their own personal participation with and or in Afro-Ecuadorian

NGOs, I made it clear that I was referring to actively participating as a member or someone with a title within an organization, if they supported any organization or group by providing that group with their time, money, or some personal skill, or if they simply supported an organization or group by attending its meetings and/or events. Morgan highlights the fact that participation in NGOs can be viewed as a political act that supports marginalized and minority groups "take charge of their own destinies with the result being the transformation of society," (2016, 175).

Noting the differences between the two ideas of participation mentioned above, the concept of participation can be problematic. According to Cornwall (2002; 2003), there are two types of participation: *invited participation*, where NGOs "create forums for stakeholders to contribute, have their voices heard, and reach consensus," but even though these forums and workshops are popular occurrences in NGOs, they "do not necessarily result in political transformation of the way that society works" (Morgan 2016, 176). The second type is *claimed participation* which is viewed as being more organic than *invited participation* and "involves the poor taking control of the political processes without necessarily being invited in" and it seems to be most similar to Freire's notion of participation; which is 'participation as an end versus Cornwall's version of 'participation as a means,' which is an apolitical method to improve how they address the needs of the users" (Morgan 2016, 176).

On a broader scale, not just limited to Afro-Latino NGOs, Morgan notes that many difficulties impact NGOs and their ability to develop funding and that donor requirements might conflict with the "ethos and mission of the NGOs as well as lead to a reduction in innovation and diversity" (2016, 175). Due to a lack of funding, if NGOs become dependent on a specific donor, then that donor might dictate or assume control of the goals and base of that NGO. This has proven to be problematic in most cases. For example, there is corporatism in Latin America, and "donors

based in the Northern countries, may have particular visions of what needs to be the focus of development initiatives and hence services provided in countries in the Global South, who, for example, may be influenced more by international dictates than be local needs" (Morgan 2016, 175). Additionally, sometimes, relationships between NGOs and governments can be oppositional and they do not have productive arrangements. In some severe cases, the NGO may consider itself a type of "watchdog" an in turn, the government may think that the NGO is a threat to the government (Wellens and Jegers 2017). Hostile relationships such as these could have a very negative impact on participation at any level.

Busdiecker listed a few factors impacting participation in Afro-Bolivian mobilization, first, a lack of communication and collaboration on both national and regional levels. Next, she lists differences of opinion between urban and rural Afro-Bolivians. She notes that these issues, "further frustrate progress towards a truly national Afro-Bolivian movement capable of bringing about social and political participation in the Bolivian nation complete with Afro-descendants in visible positions of power in the influential social movements and political parties that currently shape the government as well as in all levels of government," (Busdiecker 2009, 134). The *protagonismo* mentioned by Busdiecker in Bolivia, also has been present in Ecuador. Jean Rahier cites one of the main issues impacting the formation of a single and solid national Afro-Ecuadorian organization is the egotism (*egoismo*) of some leaders "who perceive the organizations they lead and or have created as a means to satisfy their individual plans of self-aggrandizement" (2012, 206).

Johnson also notes factors that have been inhibiting Afro-Ecuadorian mobilizations efforts. The main factor he lists is poverty, "limited material resources in urban and rural areas require inordinate time and attention to basic survival" (Johnson 2012, 177). Ecuador faces many serious social and economic issues, "using a definition of poverty based on the concept of unsatisfied basic

needs, a majority 61.3% of Ecuadorians are poor, 70% of blacks are poor. Blacks and indians are poorer that whites and mestizos throughout the coastal and highland regions as well as in the urban and rural areas of the country," of the 70% of poor blacks, 38% are extremely poor (Johnson 2012, 180). In 2003 the poverty line was $60 per month and 34.5% of Ecuadorians earned less than $60 per month, 41% of Afro-Ecuadorians lived below the line were whites and mestizo percentages were lower, 25% and 33% respectively (Secretaria Técnica del Frente Social 2004). Johnson highlights the fact that there has been a great deal of political instability, which could arguably also be a factor impacting participation.

Johnson completed most of his research in Quito, so he was able to provide information about opinions of Afro-Quiteños. He discovered that younger Afro-Quiteños were less interested in organizing and mobilizing, and they did not try to take advantage of job or educational opportunities. Additionally, he discovered that many young people perceived participating as a waste of time since they lived in a racist society that would never change (Johnson 2012). One of his participants argued that, "some blacks are still brainwashed to reject their blackness and thereby avoid recognizing and fighting against the brutal daily reality of racial discrimination" (Johnson 2012, 192). I also noticed that this was a similar trend in Guayaquil, older people lamented that younger people were more concerned with opportunities of instant gratification, instead of working hard for potential or eventual gains.

Johnson acknowledges that some middle-class Afro-Quiteño professors whom could be potential activists or politicians, choose not to participate because they worry about "economic survival, work, family life and are often supporting members of their extended families; other black professionals do a cost-benefit analysis and choose to avoid the burdens of confronting racism" (Johnson 2012, 193). These factors could also be impacting the decision for Afro-Ecuadorians living

in Guayaquil to participate as well. Some rich Afro-Ecuadorians, like Augustín Delgado, Ulises de la Cruz, and Ivan Hurtado, have been able to climb to the top of the social ladder through working hard in soccer, and they give back to the poor communities they come from. However, Johnson notes that even people like this with social power and resources do not use their statuses or platforms to support Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs (Johnson 2012).

I wondered what led people to or kept people from participating with Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in Guayaquil, which led to the to use a survey. I conducted a survey and spoke with 150 random people about their experiences in Ecuador as Afro-descendants. We discussed their backgrounds and education, wealth, children, jobs and job opportunities. We discussed the "united or not" debate concerning the Afro-Ecuadorian communities on a local as well as a national level. Lastly, we talked about their expectations for said organizations and groups, and whether or not they participated with or in these groups. I used results from my survey as well as information interviewees shared with me in order to highlight factors that may impact Afro-Ecuadorian participation in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Considering the size of this survey population (150 people), the results of my survey can only provide the inkling of an idea of factors impacting Afro-Ecuadorian mobilization and participation. The survey data is not very representative of the entire Afro-Ecuadorian population in Guayaquil, which would have been near 230,000 people in 2010 according to the national census (INEC 2011). So, while the results may be suggestive of what is really happening in Guayaquil, a much larger survey population would need to be enlisted before any results could produce more substantial data.

Contrary to what the history of Afro-Ecuadorian participation would suggest, I noticed that there was something different happening in Guayaquil; participation was not extremely high. I did witness a "modest protest," but in light of that, many interviewees and survey participants attested to a lack of participation by the part of Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil. On previous trips to the city,

various people I came into contact with mentioned it, and I personally witnessed a lull in participation on occasion when I attended different events put on by different Afro-Ecuadorian organizations. However, I was still surprised to learn that nearly 77% of the people I surveyed had absolutely nothing to do with any Afro-Ecuadorian NGO in any capacity. Based on the results of this survey one could assume that practically 3 of 4 people have absolutely nothing to do with groups and organizations tasked with the advancement and well-being of Afro-Ecuadorians living in the city of Guayaquil. Considering the fact that Guayaquil is currently the city with the largest population of Afro-descendants in the country, and that Afro-Ecuadorians have historically dealt with and presently deal with issues of racism and discrimination, in addition to shocking disparities in regards to health, education and employment, is it strange that only one in four get involved?

In addition to the typical demographic questions, I also questioned survey participants about the characteristics that they believed made an organization or group successful, and the most popular one was [being] united. The concept of union and unity is at the top of this list and many others. This occurrence could be interpreted two ways: First, the seemingly low amount of participation and the multiple references to unity and disunion are serious aspects in their society that need to be improved on a macro scale. Secondly, unity was and perhaps still is very important to many of the survey takers. The survey participants also felt that [being] supportive, organized and hardworking were all key to having a successful organization or group. This list is very telling, knowing that the majority of this survey population did not participate with any organization, one could assume that it was because they felt these characteristics were lacking and could possibly be listed as areas of improvement for these organizations.

A participant shared her opinion as to why many Afro-organizations are not successful and it is due to a lack of commitment. In her opinion generally speaking, if there isn't a benefit to be

gained, people aren't interested in participating, "If there is a meeting, the first question people ask, 'what are they giving away, t-shirts, some money?' It's like they don't care what time it starts, or who's going to be there. Many people don't want to go or waste their time if there isn't any benefit," –Abby, 43, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. She might have a very valid point. I did not see abundant crowds of Afro-Ecuadorians participating at the FUDINE events, and interestingly enough, there were not any "extras" given away to the people who came out to support or to encourage more people to come.

In addition to asking what made a group successful, I also wanted to know what my participants looked for in an active organization or group? Surprisingly, being united was not at the top of this list, but [being] organized was very high on this list, at the very top. This population expected active groups to be very hard working and educational, which suggests that educating Afro-Ecuadorians and others may have been a crucial piece of the puzzle surrounding Afro-Ecuadorian participation in the same groups and organizations. Cross-referencing the charts on successfulness and activeness, (located in Appendix 6) by key characteristics highlights what Afro-Ecuadorian organizations and groups need to do to become more efficient. Maybe if groups were more united, organized, supportive, inclusive, educational and had stronger-leadership, people would be more inclined to get involved and actually participate more.

One characteristic that was not on both lists, but very important, is collaboration. People need to work together more often. When I conducted the survey, there were over 200 Afro-Ecuadorian groups and organizations rumored to be in Guayaquil, but according to documentation from the *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Office of the Ombudsman) there is a list of 56 organizations (see Appendix 3). I don't doubt that there are many more groups and organizations that are not listed in that documentation, but if all of these organizations are supposed to be serving the same group of people,

why is that number so large? I understand that this group is multi-faceted and one organization would not cater to everyone's needs, but over two hundred organizations for just one city, might be a factor causing disorganization. When you think of the civil rights movement in the United States, there are four (4) major organizations that stood out above the rest: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). I understand that this list is on a national level, but these organizations were founded in cities where African-Americans were working towards goals of equality and desegregation of all African-Americans living in the U.S.

Perceived Unity of Afro-Ecuadorians

Although I never directly asked anyone if their lack of participation was related to a perception of unity or lack thereof, this theme was ever-present as I conducted my research and I do believe that it must have impacted participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs and groups. For that reason, I asked my survey takers what they thought about the topic, and the following charts represents their responses to my questions about unity in Afro-Ecuadorian unity on a macro national scale and on a micro local scale.

There was a constant reoccurring sentiment about how Afro-Ecuadorians aren't united because, "Everyone fights for themselves or their own thing, but not for their race or their ethnicity," –Abby. When I questioned them about unity, 77% of the survey takers felt that Afro-Ecuadorians were not united on a national level. So, I thought that they might be more united on a local level, but 62% of the survey takers perceived that people were not united at a local level either. This data coincides with the low amounts of participation in Afro-Ecuadorian organizations that I witnessed

while I completed my field research, and it could be argued that this data feeds into the popular idea that an Afro-Ecuadorian movement (socially or politically speaking) is non-existent.

Even individuals who participated in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs perceived disunion on the local level in the very city that they work and live in, Guayaquil. It is notable that the survey participants felt that Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil were more united compared to all Afro-Ecuadorians living in Ecuador. Obviously, there may have been some bias on part of the native Guayaquileños, but the overwhelming perception was a lack in unity. I assumed that more people would say that there was more unity at home in Guayaquil, since they live there.

However, later we will see that many of the participants living in Guayaquil now, still see Guayaquil as a type of second home. Overall, the perceived lack of unity is unfortunate, but I assume that some pockets of unity must have existed in the community or else there would not have been any people coming together to form the Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. For that reason, I asked if there were any "*barrios" or* neighborhoods where Afro-Ecuadorians lived that seemed especially united?

Table 3. Most united neighborhoods according to survey participants.

Most United Neighborhoods in Guayaquil	Frequency	Most United Neighborhoods in Guayaquil	Frequency
Esmeraldas Chiquito	2	Vergeles	1
Los Guasmos	9	Bastion Popular	1
El Sur	3	Fertisa	13
Cristo da Consuelo	7	Floresta	1
Surburbios	1	Pablo Neruda	4
Isla Trinitaria (Nigeria, CENEPA, Trinipuerto)	25	Calle 8	3

Table 3. Continued

Batallon del suburbio	1	La 25 de julio	3
Fortin	1	*Serranos-Quito/Ibarra	1
Barranca	1	*Esmeraldas	3
Malvines	1		

Survey participants and interviewees answered this question with the majority of the responses being neighborhoods most associated with blackness. Although Guayaquil is a large city, there are multiple pockets of blackness in certain areas, namely the southern parts of the city and the outermost areas from the city center. The most popular area was La Isla Trinitaria, which is an island, consisting of many sub-neighborhoods like Nigeria, Trinipuerto, CENEPA and others. Fertisa was also mentioned followed by Los Guasmos (another neighborhood with sub-neighborhoods). Some characteristics these areas have in common are, their location in the southern part of the city, their history, as they consist of areas built up from mangroves swamps by migrants and are heavily populated by Afro-Ecuadorians. I visited these and other areas while I conducted my research. Fertisa was an area that I visited on more than one occasion because a friend of mine lived there, so naturally I had many survey participants from there too.

There were responses that pointed to other areas of the Republic as being more united. The areas that people mentioned on a national level were Esmeraldas, Quito and Ibarra. Then, one individual, Roman, 25, an Afro-Ecuadorian man from Quito, living in Guayaquil, believed that "*serranos,"* people from the mountainous areas of Quito and Ibarra, were more united than *"costeños,"* people from the coastal areas of Esmeraldas and Guayaquil. This notion could be an aspect of regionalism with a preference for the capital. However, there was also one participant, who concluded that the more-under developed an area is, the more united it would be. In the past before the 1970s, Johnson highlights how "most black activism was manifested in peasant and worker

struggles for land, respect, jobs, and justice," and that there was primarily a focus on Afro-Ecuadorian rural farmers and laborers (Johnson 2012, 181). Although this is a testament to how life was in the past, it still represents a divide between the rural and the urban. This perspective highlights how social-economic status and class could impact unity of Afro-descendant communities in Ecuador. One comment by another survey participant supports this way of seeing the world, "there is a rivalry between educated black people (with degrees) and non-educated black people," – Maggie, 45, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman living in Guayaquil.

This phenomenon has been highlighted by other scholars as well, where they also note the difference between the elite Afro-Descendant members of some other Latin American countries (Lóa-Montes 2017). This sentiment could factor into the percentage of participation in Afro-Ecuadorian organizations, taking into consideration the number of individuals with degrees in higher education vs. individuals who did not graduate with a degree in higher education. And according to my data (located in Appendix 6), there were fewer individuals with higher education degrees than those who did not study after graduating high school (18% vs 55% respectively).

Participants highlighted the lack of unity and of a social movement by stating, "the Afro-Ecuadorian community is organized, but not united. Too many people want to be leaders, and everyone wants to do things their way," Bill 75, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. Along the same lines, "there is no social movement in Guayaquil, just a bunch of organizations that are doing what they think is best, and each one doing its own thing. Politically speaking, people from the Valle de Chota, (aka el Chota), have actual political positions, and their people there support them," - Pamela 43, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. However, there are substantial differences between el Chota and Guayaquil. For example, el Chota is smaller and more homogenous. People were born and raised there over generations, and they've been "culturally and politically prepped

and educated." On the other hand, the afro-community of Guayaquil is very large. It is also very heterogeneous, a significant mix of people who look the same, but come from very different backgrounds and worldviews; and who, for the most part, have not had the same educational upbringing as their counterparts in el Chota or elsewhere.

However, there were some participants who believed that Afro-Ecuadorians could be as successful as the Indigenous people. It is a popular perception that there are many more Indigenous people than to Afro-Ecuadorians. However, the number of Afro-Ecuadorians is arguably larger than the indigenous population (Hooker 2000). The Indigenous people have the government's support, which is both highly perceived and factual. For many Afro-Ecuadorians, it seems like the Indians work together more in order to obtain and achieve what they want. For Afro-Ecuadorians there's a lot of, "you do your thing and I'll do mine; you do it your way and I'll do it my way, but not the Indians," Alex, 26, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

There was a participant (Ed, 57), who argued that the reason why Afro-Ecuadorians are not united was because of the structure of the country. The system of the Ecuadorian state has not allowed the Afro-Ecuadorian community to become stronger. Since they have not been able to obtain economic strength through credit like other groups (mestizos and indigenous groups), they have not been granted access to entrepreneurship. Racism in the country has made society deem them unworthy of being on the same level as the others; these are long-lasting detrimental effects of racism. One thing that helped African-Americans stand up against racism in the United States was the fact that the type of racism they faced was extremely overt, it was so apparent that laws were passed to keep the "races" separate. In the past, Ecuador and other Latin American countries fed their Afro-descendants the same kind of wicked racism, but it was packaged differently. Instead of

being overt, it was covert! Instead of strait bold lines separating the "races," there were blurry lines that had a lasting effect of confusion on the mistreated group (Twine 1998 and Vasconcelos 1979).

Latin American ideologists projected the idea of a racial democracy when white supremacists in the United States, South African, and Europe hated the idea of miscegenation, and the type of offspring it produced (Applebaum et al 2003). This idea downplayed the fact that Afro-descendants were actually discriminated against and were victims of racism because it did not look the same as racism and discrimination in places like the United States and South Africa. What this actually did to Afro-Latinos was lull them into a pattern of thinking "we're ok;" that person called me an ugly name, but that happens here, "I'm ok;" they rejected my job application because I didn't have the "right look," but that happens here, "I'm ok." And this patterned continued until Afro-descendants living an oppressed lifestyle in other areas of the world decided that enough was enough.

It is apparent that people do come together and work together, but it is on a very small scale most of the time. People from the same barrios and families come together and serve the communities they live in, so the unity is segmented in a way. Fortunately, many of the people I interviewed and surveyed were very hopeful that the society and their condition could change, in light of the fact that Afro-Ecuadorian unity seemed very low despite all the ugly attitudes and terrible injustices that Afro-descendants have faced in the past. They saw it as a work-in-progress and as a step in the right direction.

Even though there has not been an overwhelming amount of participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, people still have issues that concern them, so I asked participants which issues (politically based or socially based) were more important to them and should be taken up by these organizations. There was an overwhelming response for social issues. Sixty-five percent of the survey participants said that social issues were the most important to them, (see Appendix 6). These social issues

included establishing educational programs to teach people about Afro-Ecuadorian culture and history, educational programs to teach people a trade or about business, programs to rescue street children, and programs to help the Ecuadorian society be more inclusive of Afro-Ecuadorians. Many of the people I spoke to commented that social change needed to happen in order for political change to happen. Scholars have said that the indigenous groups in Ecuador (and elsewhere in Latin America) have had more success politically and collectively because of the way society views them. Indigenous groups have been perceived as completely distinct from Afro-Ecuadorians (and other Afro-descendants in Latin America), despite the fact that both groups were enslaved at one point, both groups were present before the establishment of Latin American states and both groups have been subject to many disparities compared to mestizo groups in Latin America. Julia Hooker highlights this phenomenon, blacks and Indians have been historically racialized in completely different ways, and because of that racialization indigenous groups have been able to claim and hold on to a separate cultural group identity, which has benefited them more than afro-descendants (Hooker 2000).

There were some people (25%) who felt that social and political issues went hand in hand and that they needed to be address at the same time. One individual described the process to me saying, "it's like a bicycle with two wheels, one has to help the other in order to function" – Richard, 51 an Afro-Ecuadorian man. This is an interesting idea. For a select few, (9%) political issues were more important and that political power is what controls everything. Political power is important, however people (society) give politicians their power and people are social, they make up the society.

Regionalism was a topic I covered in the survey because I thought that maybe people did not participate because they did not feel committed to this city or interested in its issues, even though

everyone had an opinion about issues. Sixty percent of the people in this survey population lived in Guayaquil but were born and raised somewhere else. Perhaps many people in this population do not even consider Guayaquil their home. This fact might have contributed to their reluctance to invest in the people who live there, even if they do share common experiences and resemblances that surpass the physical and tumble into the societal realm. The data from the survey highlights the truth of the matter, 55% of the population is not from the province of Guayas, where Guayaquil is located, but they are from the province of Esmeraldas. Esmeraldas is known as the "cradle of blackness" for the country for its historic concentration of Afro-Ecuadorians. Interestingly, many NGO participants in this survey population actually hailed from Esmeraldas. The majority of the NGO participants (63%) serve in Guayaquil even though they aren't from there, (see Appendix 6).

The Afro-Ecuadorian community at large is dispersed over many regions. The most popular comparisons I heard were between the coast and the sierra, and the coast vs. the coast. Many people expressed a sentiment that in the sierra, los Afro-Quiteños (Afro-descendants from Quito) think they are the elite group, "we aren't close, we're unfocused and separated; with tendencies, thoughts and ideas that are very distinct because the Afro-descendant from the sierra (Quito/Ibarra) thinks very differently from us," - Robert, 33 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. It is obvious from thing that I have heard that regionalism that plays a divisive part in national unity. People repeatedly said, "*los de la sierra"* (the mountain people/*Quiteños*) are more cultured and educated vs. "*los de la costa"* (the costal people/ *costeños*) who are less formal, louder and laborers. And when they [the government] look for someone to fill a position they always pick "de la sierra" instead from "la costa." Regionalism is an important factor, the fact that the Santa Elena's providence exists alone and independent of the Guayas providence is proof (Pallares 2017).

Another example, Guayaquil and Esmeraldas, both coastal cities, but people there have completely different mentalities. Guayaquil the city, is urban and Esmeraldas the country, is rural… "It's like an Afro-Esmeraldian and an Afro-Guayaquilan don't think the same, they will share music and food (cultural aspects) but there are certain things and they're very different," –Robert, 33 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. Regionalism may very well be a factor that pushes people to participate, but it might also be the cause they refuse to participate. It would be interesting to see the results of a larger survey population. If the survey population were bigger, perhaps the data would be different, but if people share the same sentiment as most of the survey participants in this study, it could actually be very similar.

Other-isms

Classism was a theme that came about in this project while I conducted interviews. I listened to many people try to explain why Afro-Ecuadorian communities are not united and do not collaborate. One participant highlighted the issues with class,

> "If someone is professional, as is my case, and has professional friends, we think in a certain way, but there are afros who aren't (professional) and they think differently than us, and we don't think the same way as people who think they are superior to us because they have really high salaries, and it's always been that way," – Robert, 33 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Robert makes it seem as though class is always going to be a problem. If Afro-Ecuadorians cannot get over their issues with class and elitism then how will they be able to come together and work for change? The government, inadvertently or on purpose also contributes to this divisiveness. There are people who have gone through the process of learning why Afro-Ecuadorians are discriminated against and what racism is and how it works, but more often than not, the government will pick a

famous black person, like a soccer player, for a position they really are not that experienced to be in, just to make a quota. This causes issues within the Afro-Ecuadorian community because some people feel like it is a misrepresentation. According to one participant that I interviewed, these ex-soccer players are usually from small rural towns and may not have had the best education, but due to their talent, they were able to come up and out of poverty. So, most times they have differing worldviews from people educated on the process, and both have clashing ideologies for what is best for the Afro-Ecuadorian people.

Aside from classism, I perceived that egoism was an issue from the interviewees. Egoism is not a very helpful tool when you are trying to bring people together. Egoism took many forms but they all still boiled down to the "me factor:" what's best for "me," what about "me," what will make "me" look better, and "me" not you. One interviewee expressed his frustration stating, "When one wanted to go up, the others pull him down," –Jessica, 40, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. This was reminiscent of the crab in a barrel syndrome when someone does well or is getting ahead and moving up, someone has to bring them down. Another shared his opinion about Afro-Ecuadorians not being united because there is a lot of egotism within the same culture, and people are too selfish, "The one who has doesn't want to share or collaborate, and he as wants to be in control of everything," –Luke, 22 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Egoism and the conflicts around it seem prevalent and complicated. Sometimes participants would talk about "leaders" that do some community work, then they act like they are with or all about the community; or they act/take the position of leaders for the community and speak for the community but never consult the community. It was explained to me that the latter was a form of old leadership that some people still utilize today. An interviewee said that this causes misperceptions of both unity and disunion. These "leaders" can be people who do not even live in that community.

They say they speak in name of the people, but the people did not ask for them to be their spokesperson. Many of the people I spoke with expressed a feeling that it is more important to communicate directly with the community to see what they say. One interviewee expressed his sentiment for the word "representative," in terms of being a community leader,

> "There are afro 'representatives' that are more like 'house slaves' because they eat, talk, walk and dress like white mestizo but they aren't. Then, from their balconies (high positions) they meet with us in order to find out what we're doing but not to help or resolve any of our problems."
>
> –Henry, 73, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

It is clear that he had very strong opinions about how people become leaders or present themselves as leaders of the community. However, this is a very loaded comment, namely for what he did not say, but if people who call themselves "representatives" are like "house slaves," is everyone else supposed to be a "field slave?" Perhaps the term has been so harmful to the Afro-Ecuadorian community that he needed to paint me a picture in a very jarring way. It almost seems like in-group "othering" but in the most negative way. I had a similar conversation with a different interviewee and he basically expressed the same thing, although I think his tone was less hostile. He essentially questioned which of these leaders have an Afro-Ecuadorian consciousness, because being afro-descendant does not mean you have that awareness. And he concluded saying, "There are people who are phenotypically dark-skin like our origin but in their minds, they keep thinking like the white-mestizo until they feel the impact of racism or discrimination," –Ed, 57, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. It almost seemed like he was describing black people who are either unaware or forget their "place" in Ecuadorian society until they are reminded of their blackness. But I could not tell if it was a stab at the educated black people, who feel that their education "whitens"

them or elevates them to a certain level of whiteness, or if he was speaking in general. It almost sounded like he was speaking about someone specifically, but he didn't name any names. He did acknowledge that there were a lot of leaders, and he could see that they were actively working in their communities but he couldn't tell whether or not they have that Afro-Ecuadorian consciousness that is necessary to activate a movement, defend afro-Ecuadorians, eliminate their problems, and put them in a better situation. One interviewee mentioned the Afro-Ecuadorian general assembly members and how she felt they cared more about their political parties than the needs of their people, "They don't have anything to do with us, they're going to make their money, they raise their little finger to vote 'yes' for everything the majority says 'yes' to…," -Mary, 49, and Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. Assembly members are elected by the people but based off of the sentiment from interviewees and survey participants, they might not be as popular with people as they were when they were elected to their positions.

Continuing on the topic of leadership, I did come across some instances of what I believe to be generational conflict between some Afro-Ecuadorian NGO leaders and participants. An interviewee told me that, "Some adults have a closed mind that doesn't allow them to advance. You can't sculpt people who have already been sculpted," –Laura, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil. Maybe you cannot change a person once they have already matured and become who they are. Even though I did not give the survey participants a chance to express their opinions on this generational differences topic, it could also be a factor prohibiting people from participating in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs and groups. If the generational gap causes conflict within in organizations and groups, it might push people away from participation.

A Need for Action?

The last question I asked was meant to check and balance other questions related to my research question on factors promoting or prohibiting participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. Over three-quarters of the survey population (76%) said that there was a need for an Afro-Movement, be it social or political. If that many people feel like an Afro-Ecuadorian Movement was necessary, then maybe they also believed that one did not exist at the time I conducted this investigation. This could explain why there is lull in participation within in this survey population and the actual Afro-Ecuadorian population in Guayaquil. If people did not feel that there was a movement to get behind, why look for an organization or group to support? Even if people recognized there were issues in their society that directly and negatively impacted themselves and others like them, the actual lack of a movement could have caused even more inaction. If you recall, 77% of the population did not participate in any Afro-Ecuadorian organization or group and nearly matches the amount of people who did not believe an Afro-Ecuadorian movement existed. What then, if anything, could this data tell us about what is happening in Ecuadorian society for people of African-descent? Well, they are not that content and must want some change. If that were not the case, why would so many people think that a movement is necessary? More importantly, why are not more people involved, what is stopping them from forming or being a part of the change that they seem to be waiting on?

This survey was not a smoking gun and did not point out direct issues or highlight the probable causes concerning the lack in participation with Afro-Ecuadorian groups and organizations. I am still left with the same questions: What was happening within these Afro-descendant communities, why did so few people decide to participate, and what motivated those few people to participate? I thought that my survey questions would lead me straight to the answers for those questions, but it did not. The survey covered economic demographics, family demographics, and

personal opinions, but even with all of the questions I asked, I still could not come to a definitive answer for those two questions. All of my survey responses were split, there were both positive and negative responses for every question and situation. There were people who had children to take care of, but still participated and there were those who had kids and did not participate. There were people who were wealthy and participated, but there were also wealthy people who did not participate; there were poor people with little to no income who still participated, but there were also those who did not participate. There were educated people with careers who participated, but then there were also educated people with careers who did not participate.

I did notice that there were a few salient factors about the people who did participate, and one was gender. The majority of the people who actually participated on some level or another, were women. That was not overly surprising considering the fact that studies exist (Mohai 1992, Xiao and McCright 2014) that show women usually participate more than men do. Then there's a cultural explanation too, Guayaquil is a city in Latin America where machismo is very evident, and the idea that the "gendering of caregiving as women's work encourages women to focus more on threats to the safety and well-being of their family members," might promote women's participation in organizations and groups which address those threats (Davidson and Freudenburg 1996, MacGregor 2002). Ollie Johnson also notes that Afro-Ecuadorian women in Esmeraldas, Quito, and Guayaquil started to form their own groups and organizations to address and combat a host of issues surrounding economic and health disparities as well as social and family problems concerning racism, discrimination, sexual abuse, alcoholism, and domestic violence (Johnson 2012).

In *Orpheus and Power*, Michael Hanchard describes the formation of various levels or modes of "racial consciousness." He argues that a developed racial consciousness within members of the same group should result in "individual or collective action that will counterbalance, transpose, or

transform situations of racial asymmetry," i.e. racism and discrimination, (Hanchard 1994). In the United States, the definition of the term "woke" began to transform and take on new meaning as early as 1962 in an article by William Melvin Kelly, an African-American novelist; it has gained even more popularity lately thanks to the African-American singer and songwriter Erykah Badu, (Tate 2017). Being "woke" is the main characteristic that the people who actually did participate in an Afro-Ecuadorian NGO had in common. The Oxford English Dictionary states that "*woke*" had been extended figuratively to refer to being 'aware' or 'well-informed' in a political or cultural sense, by the mid-20th century," in an article written by Crystal Tate, (Tate 2017).

Each one of the Afro-Ecuadorian people who participated in an Afro-Ecuadorian NGO were consciously aware of the wrongs that afflicted Afro-Ecuadorians in their communities, and they were actively trying to do something about it. They may have developed that consciousness in different ways due to different life experiences, but in the end, they recognized that being an Afro-descendent in Ecuador meant that people would look down on you, treat you inferiorly, and try to keep certain opportunities away from you. They were "woke," and had developed a sense of racial consciousness. This term describes the people who were and are participating in organizations and groups that focus on addressing many of the political and social issues that Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil face on a daily basis. It resonates with the argument that Hanchard makes in his book about how a developed racial consciousness within members of the same group should result in individual and/or collective action to combat those issues that their community faces (Hanchard 1994).

We could speculate that developing racial consciousness for your group plays a crucial role in the formation and function of collectivity and solidarity within a group. This is great news, but what about the other groups? In the following chapter I provide some ideas that could potentially help combat the racism, discrimination and disparities they face.

CHAPTER VII

CONDITIONING CHANGE

In this chapter I cross the line from being a participant observer to an advocate for Afro-Ecuadorians, as I discuss ideas that I believe might make a difference for Afro-Ecuadorians, Ecuador, and the (Afro)-Latin American society at large by replacing old thought patterns and perceptions with new conditioning that could lead to big changes in their society. Some of these ideas come from the participants and some of them are a mix of my own personal ideas, which have been influenced by my experiences as a Black woman, born and raised in the United States. Here, in this chapter, I ponder whether or not educational and economic empowerment, positive imagery, increased collectivity and new negritude, could make new long-lasting powerfully positive impacts on the personal and societal perceptions of Afro-Ecuadorians. Ultimately, these "ideas" were born out the topics of "participation" and the debates about the existence of an Afro-Ecuadorian movement.

People have been wondering if there is or is not a *Black* movement happening in Ecuador. Ollie Johnson III supports the idea that there *was* a *Black* movement in the past, which began in 1979 with the formation of the *Centro de Estudios Afroecuatorianos* (Afro-Ecuadorian Studies Center) in Quito, Ecuador (Johnson 2012). There are other authors who support similar claims (Whitten et al. 1995; Walsh and Garcia 2002). However, in 2012 while I was conducting preliminary research, one conversation stuck out in my mind. In an interview from a documentary detailing the lives of Afro-Ecuadorians, Sonia España, leader of the group *Mujeres Progresistas*, stated plain and simple, "There are little groups… there is no movement… it doesn't exist, it's a lie. When all the

blacks, when we are one, just one, then we are going to have a true movement." –Sonia España, (Rivera 2012).

I wanted to hear what the "every day" people had to say about it, so I talked to survey participants and interviewees, and there were many who did not believe that there was any movement spearheaded by Afro-Ecuadorians when I conducted my investigation in 2014. People felt that a movement was in the making and that under the right conditions, Afro-Ecuadorians could have a movement that is as popular and successful as the Indigenous movement in Ecuador.

The Evolving Role of the Anthropologist

Before I go into great detail about the suggestions I plan to share, I need to address that fact that I am being a bit unorthodox in my methods by even producing strategies that may or may not be of use for my study population. Historically, anthropologists were just "translators of culture and placed themselves alongside others engaged in forms of cultural translation, within humanistic research" (Harris-Jones 1985, 226). Anthropologist went to "faraway lands" to study people who lived in very different ways, looked very different and were considered very strange according to modern societies standards. Then it was our job to decipher their "otherness" in a way that made sense to the academics of our society. Traditionally speaking, anthropologists did not usually have prescriptive measures for their research population, but the discipline has come a long way. The trend of past anthropologists sitting back and observing the group of their interest for "understanding," has passed by long ago. We have arrived to an era where we are no longer seeking the strangest, most-isolated populations of people in order to make sense of their culture. Anthropology has evolved, although it took several stages to get to where we are today, governments used to use anthropologists as "spies" to help colonize areas and people for big empires have dissipated. Now that we have come to a point in modernity where we can literally take a look around

us and focus on what is less than an arms-length away. We have come to a point where if we do decide to focus on populations of people away from our homes, who are in need of some type of assistance, we can advocate for them. As researchers, it is our duty to study, and then educate others by sharing the information that others shared with us to create our findings.

Phillipe Bourgois proved that it was important to take the chance of engaging in research with political stakes when he participated in a trial to attest to the cruelty he witnessed from the El Salvadorian government. He argued to, "engage with political stakes that matter to the people who bear a disproportionate toll of the suffering caused by the inequalities that power imposes. Ethnographers cannot presume to speak on behalf of the world's socially excluded but writing against inequality is imperative. Denouncing injustice and oppression is not a naïve old-fashioned anti-intellectual concern or a superannuated totaling vision of Marxism; it is a vital historical task intellectually because globalization has become more synonymous with military intervention, market-driven poverty and ecological destruction" (2006, x). I had to crossover the imaginary line of observer and scholar, in order to offer up these ideas. It is my aim to try to help when, where, and how I can. Although I am not a practicing anthropologist, I believe that when you work with a group of people who could use some form of help, the right thing to do is attempt to assist those people instead of broadcasting the fact that they are having some problems.

The 1971 American Anthropological Association code of ethics said that anthropologists have a responsibility to the public, "as people who devote their professional lives to understanding people, anthropologists bear a responsibility to speak out publically both individually and collectively, on what they know and what they believe as a result of their professional expertise gained in the study of human beings, that is, they bear a professional responsibility to contribute to an "adequate" definition of reality upon which public opinion and public policy may be based.

Sanford notes a change in the 1998 code of ethics where speaking out publically ceased to be a responsibility and was reduced to being optional, "Anthropologists may choose to move beyond disseminating research results to a position of advocacy. This is an individual decision, but not an ethical responsibility," (AAA 1998) in Sanford 2006. Bourgois helped open the doors for advocacy anthropology when he crossed the "ethical lines of responsibility" and the Honduran border with that group of people running for their lives.

Cultural Anthropology is an ever-changing discipline because people and their cultures are constantly changing. "Today's engagement for many cultural anthropologists involves investigations that consider such issues as social justice, inequality, subaltern challenges to the status quo, globalization's impacts and the ethical positioning of our field research in situations of violent conflict" (Warren, 2006, 206). I initially chose to conduct research because I was upset and shocked about the fact that Afro-Ecuadorians had been invisibilized for centuries.

Once I began field research in Ecuador, I wanted Afro-Ecuadorian to be treated better by their government and their society. Knowing that Afro-Ecuadorian social mobilization began in the early 1980s, I was curious about what happened to the progression of that movement. This guided my focus on factors that promoted or prohibited people from participating in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in the hope that identifying these factors could result in more participation in those NGOs. This increase in participation could result in the re-ignition and progression of Afro-Ecuadorian mobilization. The suggestions were a result of ideas mentioned by survey and interview participants, and my own personal experiences as a black woman born and raised in the United States.

Educational and Economic Empowerment

During my research, I surveyed and interviewed people on the topic, and then I asked them what they thought would be necessary to have a successful movement. One of the main ideas people shared focused on education,

> "The best way to better yourself is through education, but sadly too many young people aren't interested. Many stop attending school after primary school, in the past parents were able to make their children go to school and it was obligatory. Now since many mothers spend the day working, there isn't anyone at home to force kids to go to school,"
>
> -Abby, 43, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

"I think that if people were more educated about their history people would be more willing to get more involved. Organizations here are lacking solidarity and training would help with that, then there would be something strong like the Indians," -Luke, 22 an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. "A great majority of our people still lives in ignorance, and it's more occupied with figuring out how to feed its children," – Ed, 57, and Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Educating people and making them racially, socially and historically aware could play a huge role in the development of a strong political or social movement, and it would benefit everyone involved. If there were larger groups of people who knew about the multitude of cultures, laws, and histories of Ecuador, it could open doors that are not currently open for all Ecuadorians, but especially Afro-Ecuadorians as they are one of the most discriminated groups.

One of the participants mentioned another issue that needs to be addressed in order to have a stronger movement, economic development. Both Ed and Abby stated that presently, it is difficult to force children to go to school because their parents are not at home to push them. Their parents are

very busy working to provide for their families, and usually far away from home. I met some mothers who worked in the homes of wealthier mestizo Ecuadorians located about an hour away taking the bus. Economic power could come with great benefits, but unfortunately Afro-Ecuadorians are blocked from attaining that type of power because, "Black people still lack political influence because they don't have any economic power," –Abby.

Economic insecurity is one the factors prohibiting participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. One participant put it this way, "If I'm not well (financially speaking), how can I help the others?" – Tom, 31, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil. A serious issue with participation in organizations lies in the fact that the participants/volunteers have families to support and have to rely on their own jobs, outside of their organizations, to make sure they earn an income to support their families (Johnson 2012). Another participant felt the same way but argued that the government could do more to help,

> "A person who is ill can't help a person who is starving… if the Afro-descendant population doesn't have a steady workflow, having all the needs it has, it cannot participate in voluntary social work to help someone who is in need. The state could do it because it handles everyone's money."
>
> –Richard, 51, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

Economic insecurity has been a long-term issue for Afro-Ecuadorians since the start of the Republic, and even though some gains (collective rights, Decreto 60) have been made and some laws (racial discrimination is illegal in Ecuador) have been passed to "remedy" this issue, it has not gone away (Hooker 2005, Rahier 2012, Johnson 2012, Ecuadorian Constitution). While I do think that changing the economic situation of Afro-Ecuadorians would greatly help their social and political movements, it is hard to make money just appear from nothing. Times have to change, and I

believe that the following suggestions could be used to change the way society views Afro-Ecuadorians and they might change the way some Afro-Ecuadorians view themselves.

Positive Imagery

I know "positive imagery" sounds lite, but I am not talking about looking at pretty pictures and thinking positive thoughts, I am referring to something much more substantial. In Chapter Five, I discussed how the internalization of negative stereotypes affected Afro-Ecuadorians and the majority mestizo population in a negative way, and that needs to be addressed and has to change. Using the media to change other people's attitudes towards Afro-Ecuadorians (and even Afro-Ecuadorians attitudes about themselves) could prove to be very influential. Television is one media platform that has the power to reach people all over the world, so it most certainly could reach many people in a country like Ecuador. Rob Waters argues the importance of television and the televization of race politics in the United States and Great Britain, and how both black and white people in Great Britain learned about race and racial identification by watching television. The whole experience seemed to have had a huge impact on black Britons, "witnessing US civil rights and Black Power time and again narrated as a formative movement in black identity and the constitution of black politics," (Waters 2015, 952). "The era of blackness in the USA seemed to show us a direction. Television gave us a long line of black spokesmen," (Waters 2015, 952). By 1965 91% of adults in Great Britain watched television, and like Ecuador, most of the images did not portray of black people in a positive light; and it remained that way until the late 1970's (Waters 2015). Television has the power to change its viewers' opinions of "non-desirable" people in a nation. There is proof of this by the reactions people had to the documentaries of sit-ins and other demonstrations that occurred in the southern United States, where people were abused and beaten on live television during the Civil Rights movement (Torres 2003).

An educational program at school, on the television, on Facebook, or even on You Tube to educate people about afro-Ecuadorians would start to erase, or at least challenge, the misrepresentations of afros that people always see. Since the state and everyone else loves to highlight cultural and athletic prowess of Afro-Ecuadorians, you can always see images of soccer and Afro-Ecuadorians, or a couple in a Marimba outfit. However, it's very rare to see Afro-Ecuadorians positively displaying the other aspects they can offer society. I believe images can be haunting, but they can also inspire change and admiration. One of my interviewees expressed how she would facilitate that change,

> "If I created an organization it would be to motivate these people to prepare themselves intellectually. First by changing them internally and showing them that they are not what society has told them they are, 'You are stupid, you can only play soccer.' I think that you have to change the mentality. I like to watch movies about real life, but of the black people. In the movies I've seen, the black people that rise up are the ones who were intellectually prepared,"
>
> -Megan, 36, an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil.

Changing the image that people have of you and that you have of yourself could lead to positive changes. One way that Afro-Ecuadorians can start to shed the negativity that surrounds them is through television and perhaps the movies. One thing that always surprised me was the fact that almost everywhere I went I saw a satellite dish or someone was watching videos and shows on their cell phones. Black television shows helped created positive images of black people in the United States. Shows like "The Cosby Show," "A Different World," "Family Matters," "Sister, Sister," "Moesha" and others helped our society see black people in a different and more positive way.

The Black Panther movi(ment) brought Black people from multiple communities across the globe together to celebrate a Black super hero movie. Seeing black people in positions of power, and not in stereotypical negative roles, inspired thousands of people. Some people believed these images were so powerful that school trips were organized to take children to the movies. Super stars, like rapper Kendric Lamar, award-winning actress Octavia Spencer and television show host Ellen DeGeneres, bought out entire theatres so that black children would get to see the mostly all black cast, directed by a black director with black women rocking amazing natural hair styles (Williams 2018). There were even Facebook posts about Afro-Brazilians mobilizing together in "segregated" shopping malls to view the movie (Branigin 2018). And it was a great Marvel movie, the director includes themes focused on black women as leaders, over-policing, unity between afro-descendant communities which were separated by forced bondage, and tradition over modernity, just to name a few. Images do have impacts on people, and these types of positive imagery of Afro-descendants in Ecuador could take Afro-Ecuadorians as well as non-Afro-Ecuadorians a long way.

I would even argue that people who lived in areas where they did not come into contact with black people had different perspectives about black people because of watching the actors behave in ways that were contradictory of how society said black people were. I'll never forget one time when a white student in an English class at my first university asked me if I was a black person like "New York" (who was a loud, and very classless character) from the "reality" show "The Flavor of Love." First, I was upset, who asks people foolish questions like this? It would be the equivalent of me asking a white person if they behaved like a certain white television character, just because they were white. Then I realized it could be a teachable moment for someone who obviously did not come into contact with black people before they got to college. So, I explained to him that not all black people act like characters on television. He easily associated me with negative images of black

people he saw on television, so, switching to positive images could work in a positive way for Afro-Ecuadorians.

This would be useful because famous Afro-Ecuadorian soccer players are idolized by everyone in Ecuador and are held in high-esteem. If Ecuadorian society saw more Afro-Ecuadorians on television on a daily basis, in a positive way, then it might start to alter the way non-Afro-Ecuadorians look at and perceive Afro-Ecuadorians. It might also do the same for and help Afro-Ecuadorians move away from internalized stigmas and stereotypes related to their blackness.

Increased Collectivity

Some Afro-Ecuadorians would argue that they do not need help from people outside of the Afro-Ecuadorian community. One participant expressed it to me this way,

> "I don't think a social movement for Afros should involve everyone, because we aren't all treated unequally. If we were all treated equally, there wouldn't be a need to talk about a black movement or an indigenous movement, we would just be talking about Ecuadorians. Then the government would belong to everyone and it would take care of everyone and wealth would be for everyone too. But for now, we have to demand differentiated public policies, affirmative action and collective rights, but as an afro-descendant community."
>
> -Ed, 57, an Afro-Ecuadorian man in Guayaquil.

While he is definitely right about Afros not being treated equally, as that has been well documented by scholars, (Hooker 2005; Wade 1997, 2008; Rahier 1998, 1999), I would argue that Afro-Ecuadorians will need the help of Afros and non-Afros alike to have a strong and significant movement in Ecuador. Focusing on the social and political movements of the indigenous communities in Ecuador and other areas in Latin America, it is clear that they have received more

help internationally, from organizations like the Inter-American Bank (IDB), the World Bank and other international NGOs (Hooker 2005). International attention has been a benefit for them, just as it was a benefit for African-Americans in the United States during the Civil Rights movement. The reasoning behind this support may vary, but it has been argued that the indigenous are a special group of people that highlight the uniqueness of people from pre-Colombian times, so they are seen as "autochthonous" groups, with distinct cultural identities (Hooker 2005).

Another issue I witnessed was the lack of unity. One comment that I heard many people repeat was how organized and united the Indigenous groups were in Ecuador. Being united promotes a higher standard of organization that is crucial for a successful movement. In the past, researchers pointed to a lack of organization as one of the reasons why Afro-Ecuadorians have not had a successful long-term social movement. Rural Afro-Ecuadorians have been able to obtain limited collective land rights like many indigenous groups, but they have yet to mobilize like their indigenous counterparts (Hooker 2005; Johnson 2012; Rahier 2012).

There were many people who participated in the US Civil Rights movement in favor of the African-Americans, who wanted more rights and to be treated equally. Those people varied in race, gender, religion and even nationality at times. So, the importance of help outside of the group is huge. I do not think Afro-Ecuadorians should continue to try going at it alone, they need some backup in the form of international allies, as well as allies at home.

New Negritude[6]

Given the living conditions and unjust treatment experienced by Afro-Ecuadorians from the dominant mestizo group (Beck et a. 2011; Walsh and Garcia 2002), one might expect Afro-

[6] Negritude is a literary movement developed by francophone intellectuals, writers and politicians from colonies in the Caribbean and on the African continent. In my usage of the terms, "New Negritude," I am envisioning Afro-Ecuadorians focusing on the pride of being Afro-descendant and having an Afro-descendant culture to embrace and celebrate.

Ecuadorians living in Guayaquil would be encouraged to participate in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs that seek to combat racism, and discrimination while providing resources that can be difficult to obtain. However, based on the data, this did not seem to be the case for my survey of the population. An explanation for the lull in participation may have something to do with the "racial consciousness" of Afro-Ecuadorians residing in Guayaquil. Michael Hanchard describes the formation of various levels or "modes of racial consciousness" based on "power relations between racial groups" in *Orpheus and Power.* He argues that a developed racial consciousness within members of the same group should result in "individual or collective action that will counterbalance, transpose, or transform situations of racial asymmetry," i.e. racism and discrimination, (Hanchard 1994). I believe that many Afro-Ecuadorians have developed this "racial consciousness" and that it is evident based off of the fact that there are many Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in Guayaquil. On the other hand, it is also very evident to me that there are many more Afro-Ecuadorians who have not developed a "racial consciousness" and I believe this fact is clearly illustrated by the lull in Afro-Ecuadorian participation from the survey population from my investigation. Peter Wade argued that the absence of defined racial identities and the presence of constant hegemonic ideologies pushing the idea of racial democracy, (which were wide-spread throughout Latin America) while at the same time perpetuating racism and discrimination toward afro-descendants, retarded a "black political consciousness" from developing in the black communities of Latin America, but it encouraged identifying more with whiteness and participating in miscegenation with white people (Wade 2008). This has actually happened and was described to me by my Afro-descendant participants as a process referred to as "*mejorar la raza*" or "bettering the race," and it is completed by making future generations "whiter" through racial mixing. One of the best ways to combat this historical pattern of

shying away from one's blackness is through developing a reverence and love of one's heritage. For Afro-Ecuadorians that would take on the form a new Negritude movement in Ecuador.

Negritude laid the foundation for a "concept of black consciousness and black pride," along with a sentiment that it was a positive thing to be black (Rabaka 2010, 99). At its time in history, Negritude represented a completely radical way of thinking that has continued to impact and influence African descendants around the globe. It was a theory that "encompassed and engaged trans-African aesthetics, politics, economics, history, psychology, culture, philosophy, and society" when no other theories remotely focused on the importance of "Africanness," but especially blackness existed (Rabaka 2010, 99). Negritude was founded by Aimé Césaire, Léopold Senghor and Léon Damas, in the early 1930s during a time period when many blacks longed for recognition as equals amongst white Americans and Europeans. Since those battles are still being fought today, this ideology could be a great help to Afro-Ecuadorians and some Afro-Ecuadorians believe so as well. While I conducted research and attended different events, I did see more people utilizing more African dashiki-inspired clothing in 2014 compared to my first trip in 2008. I realize that this is only one way of many to take pride in one's heritage, but it is a step in the right direction and more Afro-Ecuadorians should be exposed to it.

Aimé Cesaire sought to deracinate continental and diasporic Africans internalization of anti-black racism and Eurocentrism. He tried to deconstruct "white truths" that "blacks are and have always been uncivilized, unintelligent, primitive and promiscuous" (Rabaka 2010:104). He attempted to deconstruct these "truths" through a "violent affirmation of Negrohood," while simultaneously battling alienation at the hand of white Europeans. Ceasaire knew and understood the importance of solidarity amongst blacks, and that it could serve as a form of resistance to the politics of assimilation; he understood that "a decolonization of consciousness" and "search for identity"

were essential to the process of changing how the world viewed blacks, but most importantly how blacks viewed themselves (Rabaka 2010:105). By rallying blacks to come together and celebrate themselves, albeit through prose, essays, poems, and artwork, Negritude, through controversy, created a space for blacks during a time period where blacks were set aside, marginalized, invisibilized and criminalized.

Based on personal experiences and information from others concerned with Afro-Ecuadorians, it seems like what Afro-descendants living in Guayaquil may be missing is the overwhelming pride of being black that we see exemplified through Cesairian Negritude. Changing the attitudes of nonblack Ecuadorians regarding black Ecuadorians is a tremendous task, but it is a task that has to come from within the Afro-descendant community. If all Afro-Ecuadorians aren't proud of their heritage, it will be difficult to get other non-Afro-Ecuadorians to feel respect for them. Negritude was a movement that (in least in the mind of Aimé Cesaire) it was ok, no, it was great to be a black man, he said it was, "fine and good to be a negro" (Rabaka 2010:104). Césaire embraced his blackness and firmly believed that his culture was just as good if not better than European culture. Afro-Ecuadorians have only recently been celebrating their own unique culture, recognizing traditional dance forms, culinary expertise and rich folklore, on a public platform. If there is going to be any hope of equal treatment and acceptance of Afro-Ecuadorians by non-blacks, the community will have to be innovative in the fight for space in their society.

Taking pride in their culture and celebrating blackness would provide the opportunities for Afro-Ecuadorians to rise up, be seen and heard as a group of people who add value and are of great worth to the Ecuadorian nation. This would mean an end to self-hatred and a deconstruction of white truths that have also run rampant in Ecuador. It would force others to stop treating Afro-Ecuadorians as third-class citizens in their own country.

While I understand that these suggestions may not end all the racial tension, discrimination, and numerous disparities Afro-Ecuadorians encounter, I do think they could make a difference. Due to racial mixing throughout the history of Spanish colonization, including the area we now recognize as Ecuador, there are some Afro-descendants who do not even identify themselves as Afro-descendant and refuse to be categorized as black/*negro* or Afro-anything. I know that there are some groups that refuse to be tied to an identification that is "black" or "Afro" because in their society their having a lighter complexion/phenotype gives them the "upper hand" economically and socially speaking. Since it is better to be anything but "black" in their society.

Receiving international help could strengthen Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, as well as draw more attention to the actual day-to-day lives of Afro-Ecuadorians for everyone in the country. It could even promote non-Afro-Ecuadorians to get involved and try to make a difference in the lives of their fellow countrymen. International attention could even change the way the government interacts with Afro-Ecuadorians which could promote taking real action against people who commit racist actions and discriminate against Afro-Ecuadorians. Changing the way Afro-Ecuadorians are presented in the media could also make way for huge positive changes for them in Ecuadorian society and perhaps elsewhere. These changes could be so positive that they motivate people who have shied away from their blackness to embrace it, which could lead to an increase in participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs. The changes could also impact the way non-Afro-Ecuadorians perceive and interact with Afro-Ecuadorians. The Black Pride movement in the United States did a lot for African-Americans in the past and it has continued to do so today. For example, now it is acceptable and popular to use certain "black" hairstyles like afros, dreadlocks, cornrows and other braid styles, (even for non-Black people) in a professional workplace setting, when fifty years ago it was frowned upon for everybody. In this day in age accepting different aspects of "Black culture" is

commonplace in the United States and abroad. In Ecuador, perhaps accepting more aspects of Afro-Ecuadorian culture might be the best way for others to start accepting Afro-Ecuadorians.

Feasibility

Although I assume the implementation of these ideas could create great outcomes for the Afro-Ecuadorians, limited resources might cause a delay in implementation. First, limited funding could impact the production of positive pro-black images in Ecuador's media. The people in charge of the media, writers, and producers would have to drastically change their behavior to create *telenovelas* (soap operas) or other sitcoms with more space for Afro-Latino faces depicted in a positive light, and someone would have to take an interest in funding them. Perhaps funding could come from other international organizations to help with this endeavor. FLACSO did complete a collaborative project with some Afro-Ecuadorian organizations to create a documentary about Afro-Ecuadorian experiences in Guayaquil (Rivera 2012). Another possibility for them to get this positive imagery can come from abroad. There are writers and producers who create sitcoms and movies depicting Afro-descendants in more positive ways than not. One good example of an international film with positive imagery of Afro-descendant people is *Blank Panther*.

On the topics of collectivity and new Negritude, that positive imagery of Afro-descendant people could really contribute to positive outcomes. A combination of positive imagery and positive interactions with Afro-Ecuadorians would make non-Afro-Ecuadorians more inclined care about equality for a group of people that they can actually relate to. Creating an environment where these scenarios are possible may be challenging, but they could make a positive impact on Ecuadorian society. Also, if it did become successful, then it could lead to implementation in other Latin American countries were Afro-Latinos are a part of the marginalized minority group.

Educational empowerment should be feasible through the government. Since the constitution already allows for Afro-ethnic education, within certain contexts of collective rights, the legal parameters to extend such a practice should already be established, so that they could be extended to more people in the country. Perhaps a curriculum could be developed and executed within rural areas as well as in urban metropolises in order to promote Afro-Ecuadorian culture and history across the nation and battle negative stereotypes. Economic empowerment would also help Afro-Ecuadorians develop funding for the positive imagery suggestion, and the educational empowerment suggestion. In order for Afro-Ecuadorians to gain more access to credit, I believe laws would have to be put in place and enforced, to ensure that Afro-Ecuadorians were afforded the same rights as all Ecuadorian citizens. Considering the aforementioned, this may be the most difficult suggestion to implement, since it depends completely on the state.

My aim with this chapter was to contribute to solving some of the issues that Afro-Ecuadorians and others like them encounter in their societies. In the following chapter, I'll discuss areas and topics where I believe this research could be expanded and applied to other cities in Ecuador and throughout Latin America.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Summary

This investigation began with a trip to Guayaquil, Ecuador and a curiosity about the African Diaspora in Latin America. It is the result of questions concerning participation within in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil, Ecuador with non-governmental organizations as well as questions concerning an Afro-Ecuadorian social movement. I aimed to focus on issues with participation by searching for factors within the population that promoted and or prohibited involvement with Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in Guayaquil. I conducted surveys and interviews through a process using both random sampling and snowball sampling. I utilized both open-ended and single answer questions with people who had time to spare for me. The surveys I conducted took place all over the city of Guayaquil, from places like a mall to a street corner in the historic downtown area.

My initial objective was to find answers to issues concerning participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, as well as witness the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement in action. I was also interested how solidarity and collectivity functioned in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil, Ecuador. When I began the investigation, I had hoped to find solutions to some if not all the mysteries surrounding the problems and issues about participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs and give them back to the community, so they could get back to the activism that had started in the early eighties. While I conducted the investigation, I learned that it although it may not have been my place to find the solutions, it would be acceptable to highlight a "*chispa*" or a spark that would be beneficial and lead to positive changes. After all, some of these people had become my friends and

people I care about. Once I had completed my investigation I made suggestions that some people will like and others might not be so accepting, but I hope they can help in some way.

One the biggest obstacles I encountered was the sheer size of Guayaquil. It is an enormous place, which is heavily populated with a multitude of places to see, walk around, and experience. That turned into a complication when I attempted to visit all of the neighborhoods that were associated with blackness. While I did have the opportunity to visit some of them, I did not get to see ALL of them. I believe that if I were working with a team of four-five anthropologists, it would have been much easier to more areas and conduct more surveys. Mentioning the surveys, if I would have had more assistance, and asked questions in more areas around Guayaquil, I might have obtained more information and responses that could have made my data more significant. This way, my data would have represented more of the actual population's opinions, experiences and perspectives. I also think working with local researchers would greatly enhance any investigation in this area in the future. Since they would already be familiar with the areas as well as the people living in those areas, both individuals and neighborhoods would be more easily contacted and visited.

It was important that I gave people a voice with this investigation. We talked about many topics concerning their preoccupations with their society, their hopes and dreams for their city and country. We also talked about the changes they expected to see over time. This investigation gave me the chance to interact with people and ask them about their own personal perceptions on what they saw happening around them in the communities and surrounding areas. One of the key features I was interested in when I began this journey, centered around the idea of an Afro-Ecuadorian social movement. There was speculation that it had been dormant for some time was trying to take off and gain ground once again.

Significance

There have been many accounts on the varied experiences of being an African descendant, throughout Latin America (Nacimento 1980, Wade 1997, Yelvington 2001, Sheriff 2003). These investigations have focused on historical and current experiences of health and educational disparities, socioeconomic realities, and social relationships between Afro-descendants themselves and non-Afro-descendant others, and they have been conducted by political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists alike. There are also many other scholars such as Peter Wade (1995, 1997), Juliet Hooker (2000), and George Reid Andrews (2004), who have dedicated time and resources investigating mestizaje, whitening, race and ethnicity and how they function in Latin American society. Jean Rahier (1998, 1999, 2003, 2012), Sara Busdiecker (2009), and Tanya Golash-Boza (2010) have conducted investigations on racism, discrimination, collective identity formation and social mobilization for Afro-Descendants in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru respectively. More recent research published on the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement and its social organizations have concentrated on when and which groups formed, what those groups are accomplishing, how successful were they with petitioning the state for equality and the end of discrimination, and how they compare to indigenous movements (Whitten and Quiroga 1998, Walsh and Garcia 2002, Antón Sánchez 2007, de la Torre 2002, Halpern and Twine 2000, Hooker 2000, Johnson 2012.) I decided to situate this dissertation within the context of popular questions focused on studies concerning Afro-Latinos. George Andrews provides a great contrasting tool with his article (Andrews 2009).

Five Questions and This Project

In 2009 George Andrews voiced five questions about research that focuses on Afro-Latin studies (Andrews 2009). In his article he questioned: (1) who studies Afro-Latin America and why? He suggested that there were two types of scholars focused on this research, one intent on

understanding how Afro-Latin America(ns) fit in to the Atlantic African diaspora, and the other focused on "race as a concept and as a social practice" (Andrews 2006, 193). This investigation seeks to go beyond generalizations on questions of race, racism and racial discrimination. Research published on the topic, has already established that both racism and racial discrimination occur, where they happen, why they are a part of many societies, and who the perpetrators are. Instead, in my study, I was to describe the effects of racism and discrimination over prolonged periods of time on the psyche and highlight what actions Afro-Latinos in Guayaquil, Ecuador have chosen to take in order to combat those issues and continue to thrive.

Next, Andrews poses the question: What is the best way for Afro-Latin American societies to obtain racial equality? Here Andrew cites the early shared- idea that racial democracy would be the "Great Equalizer," for Latin American racial inequality, but it became clear that was not the "key" in the 1970s through the 1990s when many Afro-Latin groups and organizations began to rally together to fight against racism and discrimination. This is still the popular trend in Afro-Latin America and in Guayaquil, Ecuador, which is why there are over 50 documented Afro-Non-Government Organizations as well as 250 rumored Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs in this city alone. But it will take more than the formation and mobilization of Afro-Ecuadorian organizations and groups. In Chapter 8: "Suggestions for Improvement," I provided details about what will need to happen to bring about change and racial equality in Ecuadorian society and the Latin American society as a whole. I believe the spark can come from the Afro-Ecuadorian community, but it will need to transcend that community and spread to others. The key will be getting other communities involved, both nationally and internationally.

Andrew focuses his third question on the validity of racial democracy in Latin America as a myth, reality or a mix of the two? There are many countries in Latin America which pride

themselves on their nationalistic ideology and indoctrination of racial democracy, claiming that racism is not present nor is the violence, marginalization or the many other negative connotations that are associated racism present in their communities. They claim that blanqueamiento, or the systematic whitening of non-white communities through miscegenation (racial mixing), has unified the once diverse communities, which populated their countries. It should be noted that the ancestry of the citizens in Latin America consists of three groups: Native Americans, Africans and Europeans. The claims of unity by blanqueamiento are just that, claims. In all actuality blanqueamiento and the subsequent ideology of racial democracy has resulted in the marginalization and mistreatment of Afro-descendant communities in the past, and has continued to do so in the present (Andrews 2004; Hooker 2005; Wade 1997).

The truth about racial democracy is that it was employed by Latin American intellectualists as "constructive miscegenation" in an "attempt to subvert the negative rendering of racial mixing into the positivist thought into attributes of nation building." Harchard's research in Brazil highlights the situation of this myth that many Afro-descendants living in Latin America have to fight against, regardless of the fact that it has always been working against them, without many realizing it (Hanchard 1994). In the past, the slave was African and held the lowest rank in society, then black became associated with slave, which was already a negative term, so people shied away from it and any ethnic associations with it (Andrews 2004; Nascimento 1980). Then *blanqueamiento* was introduced and presented false hopes for Afro-Descendants to be treated equal as all the other white mestizo citizens, whom were the majority. However, in Latin America, Afro-Descendants which prominent phenotype characteristics have continually been discriminated against and marginalized, presently and in the past textbooks have represented Blacks negatively, there has been an outright open denial of on-going racial oppression by governments, and race gets removed from political

discourses dealing with education, healthcare and employment. Many Afro-Latinos are so caught up within the ideology that they cannot identify racism and have an extreme lack of racial consciousness (Hanchard 1994).

Andrews addresses this question of racial democracy by highlighting the fact that Latin American societies in the 1970s and 1980s were NOT "characterized by relatively high levels of racial harmony and equalitarianism" (Andrews 2006, 195). It is for this reason and the others mentioned above that racial democracy is a hoax; it is a myth, which has unfortunately been indoctrinated into the minds and lifestyles of the many citizens of Latin America and is also a contributing or may even be the principle factor to the challenge of Afro-Latino communities to successfully unite collectively and obtain a similar status as indigenous groups. My own personal experiences in Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Brazil, as well as research published by other investigators (Hooker 2005, Htun 2004, Twine 1998, Wright 1990) continues to support the idea of racial democracy as an alternative fact, a lie.

Andrew's fourth question focuses on the characteristics of racial identities in Latin America, and whether or not they are as fluid, contingent, and shifting as scholars have claimed? Andrews highlights two aspects which need to be placed in consideration; is the identity in question self-selected or ascribed by the society at large? This is a question that is still easily debatable just about anywhere in Latin America. In Ecuador, I have personally witnessed people with noticeable Afro-descendant traits negate their blackness and claim a mestizo (non-Afro) identity, but I've also seen the opposite; someone with unnoticeable Afro-descendant traits, embrace their blackness more than anything else. Scholars like Tonya Golash-Boza support the idea of Latin American societies utilizing a racial identity continuum vs. a strict dichotomy of black or white, like in the United States or South Africa (Golash-Boza 2010). I support this notion, even though I was raised in the United

States where laws like the "one drop rule" and the law of hypodescent were established and upheld for years. In Guayaquil people who are light-skinned enough can negate their blackness (Afro-descendant heritage) and the society will accept it, but if you are not very light-skinned, although you may personally self-identify however you please, the society will let you know where you actually stand.

Andrews' last question: What do we learn when we compare Afro-Latin American experiences in different parts of the region, and when we compare Afro-Latin American and indigenous experiences? These comparisons provide information about different and shared experiences of Afro-descendants throughout Latin America. Comparing countries like Brazil and Colombia with other countries like Mexico and Peru show how much Afro-Latino experiences can differ. Comparisons with Indigenous experiences highlight how national perceptions changed from rejecting Indigenous groups, to protecting them, and the acceptance of Indigenous groups into Latin American national histories (Hooker 2005). Comparing the two groups have allowed researchers to study how Indigenous groups have achieved certain political advances and how, with the help of international support, they've tasted success (Hooker 2005; Rahier 2012). The comparison also provides insight to the difficulty Afro-Latinos in more "mestizo" countries have had while striving for similar success. In my project, I was able to obtain opinions about how Afro-Ecuadorians felt about the accomplishes and upsets of their indigenous counterparts in Ecuador.

My Contribution

This investigation will contribute to the scholarship on Afro-descendant participation in social movement organizations in nations where the dominant mestizo (persons of Spanish/European and Amerindian descent) population has employed long-standing ideologies of mestizaje and whitening. It will also contribute as a case study on a very specific group of Afro-descendants,

residing in a South American economic capital which was rarely associated with blackness. Considering that many studies on Afro-Latinos have focused on the Caribbean and Brazil, this study, along with work from scholars Peter Wade (Colombia), Sara Busdiecker (Bolivia), and Tonya Golash-Boza (Peru) focuses on Afro-Latinos in areas that have not been associated with blackness in the past and calls for an re-imagining of the Black Pacific (in South America) focusing on Andean countries in juxtaposition of the infamous Black Atlantic. As an anthropological study, it contains interdisciplinary components which could also be of interest to historians, geographers, immigration scholars, women's studies scholars, social movements and mobilization studies. It also could contribute to disciplined focused on Race and Identity Studies, Latino and Afro-Latinos Studies, as well as African Diaspora Studies.

While I had hoped it would also reveal several factors that prohibit or promote minority participation in social movement organizations and groups, I did find that the perception or lack thereof of unity plays a very important role in Afro-Ecuadorian communities in Guayaquil. I would argue that is key to minority participation with social movement organizations globally. This investigation is significant because of its specific focus on Guayaquil, Ecuador as an epicenter of Afro-Ecuadorian culture and lifestyle. It is unique because Guayaquil has not always been associated with blackness, but it is rapidly approaching a type of Mecca for Afro-Ecuadorians, as it is a place that many want to visit and call home. Since Guayaquil began the journey of becoming the economic capital, there has been an influx of migration to the city and it has not wavered. This study is also unique because it concentrated on the Afro-Ecuadorians making up the communities of afro-descendants living in Guayaquil. It was conducted in a way that had not yet been accomplished, by living with, interviewing and surveying Afro-Ecuadorians who lived and worked in Guayaquil. This investigation allowed me to collect data on a micro scale that sometimes gets lost in the big picture

of things when scholars focus specifically on a country or a broader area. More often than not Guayaquil, and its communities of Afro-Ecuadorians are over-looked because of historical Afro-diasporic interests in Quito, the official capital of Ecuador, or Esmeraldas, which has been dubbed as the cradle of Afro-Ecuadorian culture and people.

Future Research

Peter Wade once suggested that Afro-Latin scholars should incorporate intra-national differences as well as international comparisons with Afro-Latin communities in countries like Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, Guatemala and others (Wade 2006). One international comparison completed by Christina Sue and Tanya Golash-Boza on Mexico and Peru provided an insightful view of blackness and comparisons of black experiences in two different countries. Additional international comparison studies like these could shed even more light on the multifacetedness of blackness across Latin America. I believe that researching intra-national differences between different communities of Afro-descendants in the same country could be very essential to understanding how blackness operates in different areas, but it could also lead to understanding how important regionalism is to social mobilizations for Afro-Latinos.

For future research, I would like delve deeper into research on intra-national Afro-Latino communities in Ecuador. I would select communities like Carapungo in Quito and Nigería in Guayaquil. During the summers when I am not teaching, I would engage in participant observation, using convenience sampling, and conducting surveys and interviews in order to obtain insight on the similarities, differences, wants, needs and issues of Afro-Ecuadorian communities in the nation. Since, I have already completed field research in these cities and I have established contacts, so completion of this study could be successful.

The main purpose of this investigation on a micro scale was to focus on Guayaquil, however there are other areas like Esmeraldas, Quito, and the Valle de Chota which would also make great sites to focus on Afro-Ecuadorian communities. Regionalism was mentioned a lot while I conducted this investigation and I am sure that researching in these cities would add much more information of the state of Afro-Ecuadorian communities and it would also provide a way to contrast and compare different demographic information, differences in lifestyle, and perhaps even more information about the perceptions of Afro-Ecuadorian social and political movements. In addition, the scope and scale of such a project would provide more insight on the perceptions of Afro-Ecuadorian unity on both national and local levels. Guayaquil. These three cities represent the most populated areas for Afro-Ecuadorians and they are all different. Ecuador has the fourth largest population of Afro-descendants in Latin America and completing an intra-national study there would provide scholars with information about regional differences and expectations. This information could be applied to other South American countries with similar demographics. Continuing research focused on intra-national Afro-Latino communities of Ecuador would allow me to develop my dissertation research even more.

People in different places have different needs, wants and issues, which is understandable. While both Quito and Ibarra are considered *serranos* because of their locations in the mountains, each has a completely different culture as perceived by my survey participants and interviewees. I have been to both cities and there are differences, Ibarra is not as populated or as developed as Quito and life is much faster in Quito. On the other hand, both Esmeraldas and Guayaquil are *ciudades costales* cities located on the coast, and I can personally attest to them being very different. Guayaquil is the most populated city in all of Ecuador, it is the economic capital, and has one of the best infrastructures of the republic. Esmeraldas is almost the complete opposite of Guayaquil, even

though it is arguably the most urban city in the providence, it is not as urban and developed as Guayaquil. While I conducted research in Ecuador, I was constantly reminded of the differences between *los serranos* (the people from the northern mountainous regions of Ecuador) and *los costeños* (the people from the coastal areas). Both groups of people were Afro-Latinos, and were living in Ecuador, but people from Quito and people from Guayaquil have different perspectives on life, of each other, and their Ecuadorian society. For example, people living in Guayaquil accused *serranos* of being "*frio"* or cold, and not likely to be as happy, pleasant, or as out-going as *costeños*. There was also the contrast that *serranos* were considered more elitist than *costeños*. I had the opportunity to speak with people from two coastal cities, Esmeraldas and Guayaquil. These conversations highlighted that even between the coastal regions there were stark attitudes about characteristics that set them apart from each other. People told me that Esmeraldas was "*más tranquilo"* or more tranquil, the people were friendlier, and the pace of life was slower, while Guayaquil was characterized as the complete opposite. Conducting an investigation in these areas along with having the capability of comparing and contrasting them would be a great step in the right direction as far as researching Afro-Ecuadorian communities.

The idea of promoting studies where marginalized people get a chance to contribute by making their voices heard is very important. While I conducted research for my dissertation, I was able to meet many people and talk about different topics, like their preoccupations with their society, their hopes and dreams for their cities and country. We also talked about the changes they expected to see over time. This past investigation gave me the chance to touch base with people and ask them about their own personal perceptions on what they saw happening around them in the communities and surrounding areas. My dissertation research objective was to identify factors that impacted participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs, witness some of the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement in

action and see how solidarity and collectivity fit and functioned in the Afro-Ecuadorian communities of Guayaquil. I had hoped to find solutions to some if not all the mysteries surrounding the problems and issues about participation in Afro-Ecuadorian NGOs.

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APPENDIX A

LYRICS TO THE SONG "*HAN COGIDO LA COSA"*

Han cogido la cosa	*They've Got the Thing*
Grupo Niche	Black Group (translated in English)
	(This is my translation)
Han cogido la cosa	*They've got the thing*
Que pa reirse se burlan de mi	*In order to laugh they make fun of me*
Han cogido la cosa	*They've got the thing*
Que pa reirse me agaran a mi	*In order to laugh they grab at me*
Que tengo grande la boca y la nariz	*That I have a big mouth and a big nose*
Que nada bueno no me encuentran a mi	*That nothing good can be found in me*
Que yo soy prieto, que soy carabalí	*That I'm black and I'm Calabaran**
Pero orgulloso me siento yo así	*But I feel proud to be that way*
Han cogido la cosa	*They've understood the thing*
Que estoy de luto desde el dia que nací	*That I've been dressed in mourning since the day I was born*
Que trabajar no lo hizo dios para mi	*That God didn't make me for working*
Que me tostaron como si fuera café	*That they roasted me like a coffee bean*
Que me colaron y negrito quede	*That they bleached me and I stayed black*
Han cogido la cosa	*They've got the thing*
Blanco corriendo, atleta,	*A white man running is an athlete,*
negro corriendo, ratero	*a black man running is a thief*
Blanco sin grado doctor	*A white man without a degree is a doctor*
y el negrito yerbatero	*And the little black man is a witch doctor*
Y el negrito yerbatero	*And the little black man is a witch doctor*
Ah nah ah nah ah nah ah nah sonero	*Ah nah ah nah ah nah ah nah sound maker*
Pon eso le doy duro a los cueros	*Put this on the song and I'll beat the drums*
Vamos a hacer la cuenta	*Let's get things straight*
Que cuando se trata de salsa de rumba,	*When it comes to rumba salsa,*
yo si soy salsero	*I'm the best salsero*
Cuando suena como suena me vuelvo sonero	*When it sounds like this I become the sound maker*
Zapatero a tu zapato,	*Shoemaker to your shoe*
lo que yo soy es rumbero rumba!	*I'm the rumba boss*
Han cogido la cosa, la cosa la han cogido	*They've got the thing, they've got the thing*
Que me queme que me queme	*That I've burned myself black, black*
Y he quedado como un tizon y de ñapa disque	*That I stayed like coal and as an extra*
Me han puesto el negrito bembón bembón	*They've called me the big-lipped black man*
Han cogido la cosa, la cosa la han cogido	*They've got the thing, they've got the thing*
Pero qué otra cosa grande tiene?	*But what other big thing does he have?*
Que tengo grande la boca y la nari'	*That I have a huge mouth and nose.*
Que otra cosa grande tendre yo por ahí?	What other big thing will I have?

Han cogido la cosa, la cosa la han cogido	*They've got the thing, they've got the thing*
Que si no lo hago a la entrada	*That if I don't do it at the beginning*
La embarro a la salida	*I'll mess it up at the end*
Ay quién puede ser negro,	*Ay, who can be black*
que cosa que tan jodida	*What a fucked-up thing*
Sura negro sura	*Sura, black sura*

Han cogido la cosa lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC[7]

[7] Usage of these lyrics in this dissertation fall under the Fair Use guidelines.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF AFRO-ECUADORIAN ORGANIZATIONS FROM SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

1	Asociacion de Abogados Afroecuatorianos/ Afro-Ecuadorian Lawyers' Association
2	Asociacion Afrodescendiente de la Facultad de Jurisprencia Universidad Estatal/ State University's School of Jurisprudence Afro-descendant Association
3	Asociacion de Afrolimoneños y Norteños de Esmeraldas Residentes en Guayaquil/ Esmeraldan Northerners and Afro-Limon(ers) Residing in Guayaquil Association
4	Asociacion Afrodescendiente, "Mujeres Idealistas"/ Afro-descendant Association, "Idealist Women"
5	Asociacion de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Unidas Triufaremos/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "United We Will Triumph"
6	ASONE- Asociacion de Negros Ecuatorianos/ Black Ecuadorian Association
7	Asociacion Carlos Concha/ Carlos Concha Association
8	Centro Cultural Afroecuatoriano/ Afro-Ecuadorian Cultural Center
9	CODAE- Corperacion de Desarrollo Afroecuatoriano/ Corporation for Afro-Ecuadorian Progress *Run by the government
10	CONUAE- Consejo de la Union Afroecuatoriano/ Afro-Ecuadorian Union Board
11	COPSON- Cooperacion Progreso Social del Negro/ Black Social Progress Corporation
12	Federacion de Mujeres Afro/ Afro-Women's Federation
13	Federacion de Negros (25 de Julio)/ Black Federation, "25th of July"
14	FUDINE- Fundacion del Desarrollo Integral de Negro Ecuatoriano/ Foundation for the Comprehensive Progress of Black Ecuadorians
15	Fundacion Humaniasta Luz de Dios/ Humanist Foundation, "Light of God"
16	LEGUA Produciones/ LEGUA Productions
17	Asociacion de Mujeres Progresistas/ Progressive Womens' Association
18	Proceso AfroAmerica Siglo 21 sede Ecuador/ 21st Century Afro-America Foundation, Ecuador Headquarters
19	Nuestras Raices/ Our Roots
20	Union de Organizaciones de Negros de la provincia de Guayas, "Jamie Hurtado"/ Union of Black Organizations in the Guayas Province, "Jaime Hurtado"

APPENDIX C

DEFENSORIO DEL PUEBLO LIST OF AFRO-ECUADORIAN ORGANIZATIONS

1	Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Negras, Capitulo Guayas (*National Coordinator of Black Women, Guayas Chapter*)
2	Organización de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Fortaleza (*Fortaleza/Strength Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Organization*)
3	Agrupación Afroecuatoriana Mujeres Progresistas (*Afro-Ecuadorian Progressive Women's Association*)
4	Federación de Mujeres Negras de la Provencia del Guayas "FEMUAFRO" (*Federation of Black Women from Guayas Province*)
5	Fundación Unificación (*Unification Foundation)*
6	Fundación de Desarrollo Social Casita de Chocolate (*Social Development Foundation, Little Chocolate House*)
7	7.Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Nigeria del Futuro/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, Future Nigeria
8	Corporación Desarrollo Productivo y Microproductivo, "AFRO-COPROMEA"/ Productive and Micro-productive Development Corporation, "AFRO-COPROMEA"
9	Asociación Afroecuatoria Unidas por el Desarrollo/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association United for Development
10	Asociación Afroecuatoria Unidas por el Bien/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association United for Well-Being
11	**CO**rporación **P**rogreso **SO**cial del **N**egro (COPSON)/ Black Social Progress Corporation
12	Fundación Desarollo Intergran Afroecuatoriana (FACUNDO)/ Integrated Afro-Ecuadorian Development Foundation
13	Centro Social y Cultural de Esmeraldeños Residentes en Guayaquil "San Lorenzo del Pailón"/ Esmeraldans Residing in Guayaquil Social and Cultural Center, "San Lorenzo del Pailón"
14	Asociación de Moradores Independencia II/ Indepencia II Residents' Association
15	Unión de Organizaciones de Negros de la Provencia del Guayas/ Union of Black Organizations in the Guayas Province
16	Federación Provincial de Organizaciones y Grupos Negros del Guayas/ Provincial Federation of Black Organizations and Groups of Guayas
17	**ASO**ciación de **MU**jeres **NEG**ras de la Provincia del Guayas, "ASOMUNEG"/ Guayas Province Association of Black Women
18	Asociación Afroecuatoriana de Mujeres Solidarias/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association of Solidary Women
19	Fundación de Negros y Marginados del Ecuador, "Jesse Jackson Louis"/ Ecuadorian Black and Marginalized Foundation, "Jesse Jackson Louis"
20	Asociación Afrolimoneños y Norteños de Esmeraldas Residentes en Guayaquil/Esmeraldan Northerners and Afro-Limon(ers) Residing in Guayaquil Association
21	Club Social y Cultural los Pioneros/ The Pioneers Social and Cultural Club

Appendix C Continued (pg.1)

22	Fundación de Asistencia Social, "Sra. Cleotilde Guerrero O."/Social Assistance Foundation, "Sra. Cleotilde Guerrero O."
23	Federación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Unidas por el Cambio/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Federation, United for Change
24	Fundación de Asistencia Social Esperanza y Desarrollo/ Social Assistance, Hope and Development Foundation
25	Fundación para el Desarrollo Microempresarial, "Justicia Social"/ Foundation for Entrepreneurial Development, "Social Justice".
26	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Martina Carrillo"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Womens' Association, "Martina Carrillo"
27	Frente de Acción Femenino Comunitario del Ecuador/Ecuadorian Feminist Community Action Front
28	Asociación Nacional Presencia Negra Ecuatoriana (ANAPNE)/Ecuadorian National Black Presence Association
29	Confraternidad de Negros del Ecuador (CNE)/Brotherhood of Black Ecuadorians
30	Asociacion de Mujeres Negras, "Copa Cobana"/ Black Women's Association, "Copa Cabana"
31	Corporación de Centro Social, "Vivir con Dignidad"/ Social Center Corporation, "Live with Dignity"
32	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Fuerzas Unidas"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "United Forces"
33	Asociación Afroecuatoriana, "Dias Mejores"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association, "Better Days"
34	Asociación Afroecuatoriana "Cimarrón"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association, "Cimarrón"
35	Corporación Microempresarial Productivo Turistico de Mototriciclos Afro/ Productive Touristic Entrepreneurial Afro-Moto-tri-cyclists Corporation
36	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Unidas Triunfaremos" Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "United We Will Triumph"
37	Asociación Afroecuatoriana de Jovenes, "Liberrimo"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Youths' Association, "Liberated"
38	Asociación Afroecuatoriana, "Forjadores del Futuro"/ Afro-Ecuadorian "Future Forgers" Association
39	Asociación de Artesanos Afroecuatorianos, "Cristo del Consuelo"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Artisan's Association, "Cristo del Consuelo"
40	Cooperativa de Ahorro y Credito Iniciativa de Desarrollo de los Negros Ecuatorianos, "CONACUIDNE"/Savings and Initiative Credit Co-op for the Progress of Black Ecuadorians
41	Asociación Afroecuatoriana, "Nueva Generación"/ "New Generation" Afro-Ecuadorian Association
42	Asociación de Esmeraldeños Residentes en Guayaquil/ Association of Esmeraldans Residing in Guayaquil
43	Asociación Afroecuatoriana, "Unión y Progreso"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Association, "Union and Progress"

Appendix C Continued (pg.2)

44	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Valle del Futuro"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "Future Valley"
45	Asociación de Abogados Afroecuatorianos/ Afro-Ecuadorian Lawyers' Association
46	Asociación de Afroecuatorianos Lunchando por su Igualdad, "ADALPIG"/ Afro-Ecuadorians Fighting for their Equality Association
47	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, "Eloy Alfaro"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "Eloy Alfaro"
48	Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas, Unidas por el Desarrollo/ Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Association, "United for Progress"
49	Asociación de Mujeres, "Colombia Valencia"/ Women's Association, "Colombia Valencia"
50	Hermandad de Misoneros/as Laicos Afros/Brotherhood of Afro-Lay Missionaries
51	Unión de Organizations Afrodescendientes de la Provincia del Guayas, "Kunta Kinde"/ "Kunta Kinde" Union of Afro-descendant Organizations in the Guayas Province
52	**FU**ndación de **D**esarrollo **I**ntegral del **N**egro **E**cuatoriano (FUDINE)/ Foundation for the Comprehensive Progress of Black Ecuadorians
53	Fundación AfroAmerica SigloXXI/ 21st Century Afro-America Foundation
54	Organización Afroecutorianan, "AFROMIX"/Afro-Ecuadorian Organization, "AFROMIX"
55	Organization Afroecuatoriana, "Nuevo Amanecer"/ Afro-Ecuadorian Organization, "New Dawn"

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Could you tell me when and where you were born?
2. Are you married?
3. Do you have any children?
4. Did you obtain a diploma or a degree?
    a. Did you graduate here in Guayaquil?
5. How do you identify yourself?
    a. Which term would be best for afro-descendant Ecuadorians: black, Afro-Ecuadorian, or does another term exist?
6. Are you employed?
    a. What is your profession/ professional career?
    b. Do you feel like you make enough money to "live well" here in Guayaquil?
7. Do you have a personal car?
8. Do you rent your house or apartment?
9. Do you participate in any organization or group that supports Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil?
10. Do you think that Afro-Ecuadorian organizations should focus more on social or political issues?
11. In your opinion, what makes a group or an organization successful?
12. In your opinion, what makes a group or an organization active?
13. I've heard that Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil face discrimination, have you witnessed or experienced discrimination?
    a. Do you feel that you are treated the same as the white, indigenous or mestizo people?
14. I've heard opposing opinions about the unity between afro-descendants. Do you think that the Afro-Ecuadorian community is united?
    a. Do you think the Afro-Ecuadorian community in Guayaquil is united?
15. Do you think a Black social movement is necessary in Guayaquil or any other place in Ecuador?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Interview Schedule for people who answered "yes" to question 1:

1. Do you participate in any organization or group that supports Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil?
    a. What is your organization's/group's name?
    b. How old is your organization, when was it founded?
    c. When did you join your organization?
    d. Why did you join your organization?
    e. What is your role?
2. In your opinion, what makes a group or organization successful?
3. In your opinion, what makes a group or organization active?
4. Is your group/organization successful?
5. Are there aspects of your organization that could be improved?
    a. What are they?
    b. How would you change them?
6. How many people receive help/support from your organization?
7. How does it help your members?
    a. What services do you all offer your members?
8. Do you think that others should join your organization/group? Why?
9. Are Afro-Ecuadorians important to your organization? Why?
10. Is your organization well-known?
    a. Why?
11. I've heard that Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil face discrimination, have you witnessed or experienced discrimination?
    a. Do you feel that you are treated the same as the white, indigenous or mestizo people?
12. Do you think that Afro-Ecuadorian organizations should focus more on social or political issues?
    a. Why or why not?
13. Does your organization focus more on social issues or political issues?
    a. Why?
14. Who participates more in your organization: men or women?
    a. Why do you think that is?
    b. Do you think that is normal?
15. How do you define solidarity?
    a. Could you provide me with an example that illustrates the solidarity that you've experienced?
16. How do you define collectivity?
    a. Could you provide me with an example that illustrates the collectivity that you've experienced?
17. Do you think that the Afro-Ecuadorian community is united?
    a. Why/why not?
    b. Could you provide an example?

18. Do you think that the Afro-Ecuadorian community in Guayaquil is united?
    a. Why/why not?
    b. Could you provide an example?
19. Do you think that there are some neighborhoods are more united than others?
20. What could you tell me about the Afro-Ecuadorian movement in Guayaquil?
    a. Who are the leaders?
    b. Is the movement stronger in Guayaquil, Quito, or Esmeraldas?
    c. What do the Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil do to help the movement?
    d. Do you think there are more things they could do to help support it?
21. Are there any groups or organizations tied to the social movement here in Guayaquil?
    a. Could you name some of the organizations please?
22. Do you think a Black social movement is necessary in Guayaquil or any other place in Ecuador?

Interview Schedule for people who answered "no" to question 1:

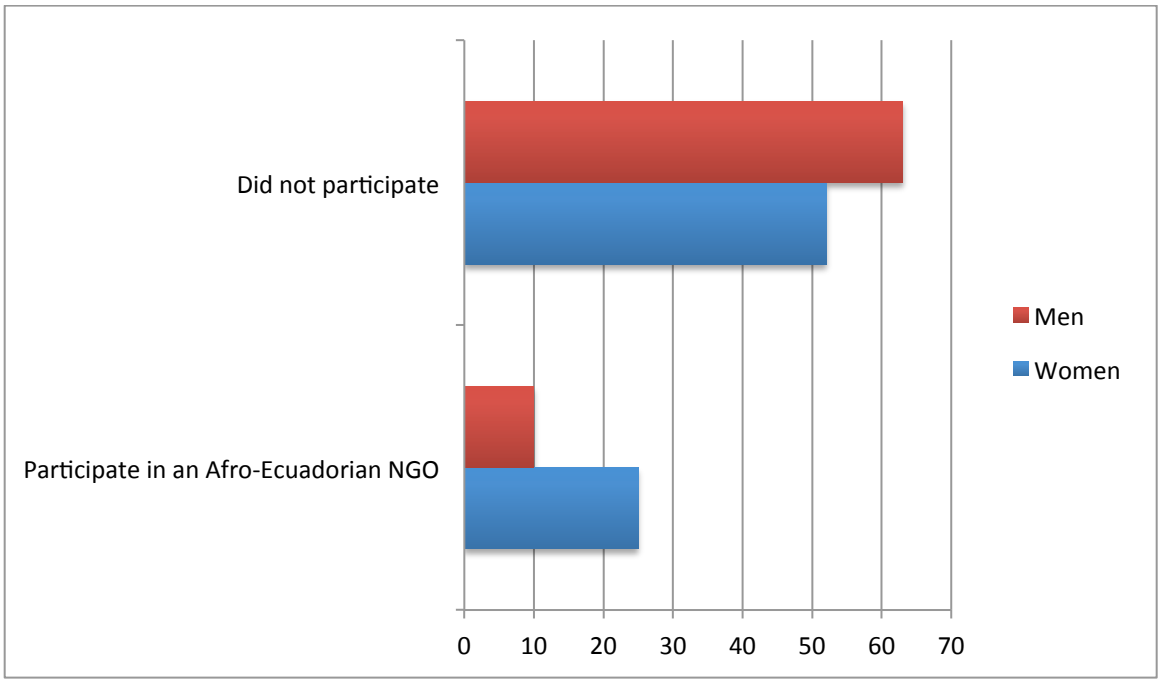
1. Do you participate in any organization or group that supports Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil?
    a. Have you ever participated with a group or organization in the past?
    b. Would you consider participating with a group or organization in the future?
2. Do you have any needs that have been difficult to obtain?
3. Would you join an organization if it could help you obtain your needs?
4. Do you know about any Afro-Ecuadorian organizations in Guayaquil?
    a. Could you name them for me, please?
5. Do you have any family members or friends that participate in an Afro-Ecuadorian group or organization?
6. I've heard that Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil face discrimination, have you witnessed or experienced discrimination?
    a. Do you feel that you are treated the same as the white, indigenous or mestizo people?
7. How do you define solidarity?
    a. Could you provide me with an example that illustrates the solidarity that you've experienced?
8. How do you define collectivity?
    a. Could you provide me with an example that illustrates the collectivity that you've experienced?
9. Do you think that the Afro-Ecuadorian community is united?
    a. Why/why not?
    b. Could you provide an example?
10. Do you think that the Afro-Ecuadorian community in Guayaquil is united?
    a. Why/why not?
    b. Could you provide an example?
11. Do you think that there are some neighborhoods are more united than others?
    a. What are some things that stick out about them?

12. What could you tell me about the Afro-Ecuadorian movement in Guayaquil?
    a. Who are the leaders?
    b. Is the movement stronger in Guayaquil, Quito, Esmeraldas?
    c. What do the Afro-Ecuadorians in Guayaquil do to help the movement?
    d. Do you think there are more things they could do to help support it?
13. Are there any groups or organizations tied to the social movement here in Guayaquil?
    a. Could you name some of the organizations please?
14. Do you think a Black social movement is necessary in Guayaquil or any other place in Ecuador?

APPENDIX F

QUANTITATIVE DATA FROM SURVEY RESPONSES

Survey Participants by gender and NGO affiliation.



The survey population of this study consisted of 150 people. There were seventy-seven (77) women and seventy-three (73) men. Not surprisingly, there were more people who did not participate in any non-governmental organization (NGO) that supported Afro-Ecuadorians (115). Previous research on the Afro-Ecuadorian population showed that there was not a lot of participation within the group. Interviews I conducted with study participants also highlighted the fact that they observed a lull in participation in general. Out of my survey population of 150 people, nearly 77% did not have any association or involvement with Afro organizations or groups. The largest group of

non-participant people (63) were men. Focusing on the gender of the NGO participants, there were more women who participated than men but these numbers were still very low (25 and 10 respectively) considering the whole study population group.

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS IMPACTING AFRO-ECUADORIAN PARTICIPATION

AGE:

Age Ranges:	Survey population	Women in NGOs	Women not in NGOs	Men in NGOs	Men not in NGOs	
18-25	37	4	13	1	19	
26-35	44	6	17	1	20	<largest segment
36-45	37	9	11	2	15	
46-55	18	3	8	3	4	
57-65	10	3	1	3	3	
66-75	4	0	2	0	2	
Total:	150	25	52	10	63	

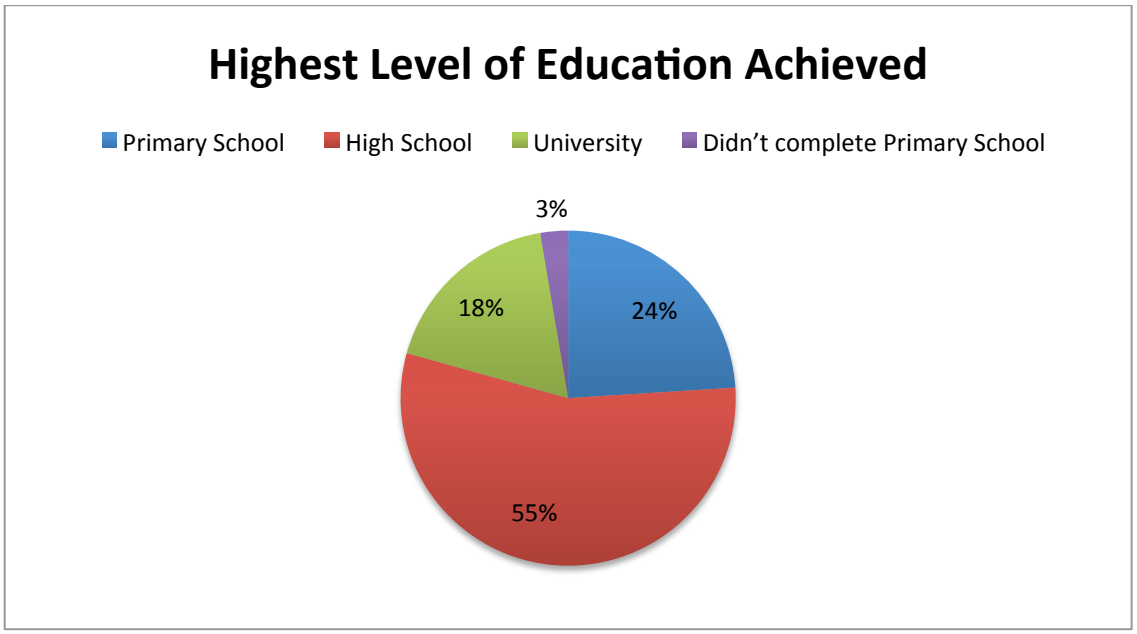
CHILDREN:

NGO Participants w/children	NGO Participants Married
25	7
NGO Participants w/o children	NGO Participants Not Married
10	28
Non-NGO Participants w/children	Non-NGO Participants Married
82	32
Non-NGO Participants w/o children	Non-NGO Participants Not Married
33	83
Total: 150	150

MARRIAGE:

In this survey population only 26% were married, while the other 74% were not. But many people within this population chose not to marry and are opposed to "formal marriage." There are a lot of people in this study population who are *unidos* or in a *union libre*. *Unidos* is translated in English as "united/together" and *union libre* translates as "free union," these titles are most like what we call common law marriages in the United States. In fact, 66%of the unmarried population in this study has a "common law" marriage, and only 34% are actually single. Couples that have a *union libre* live together in one home, they are monogamous, and they raise their children together, just as a married couple would. The only difference, as it was explained to me by Laura who's 31 and an Afro-Ecuadorian woman in Guayaquil, is if they want to split, no one will need the law to get involved, and they won't have to pay lawyers to settle a divorce. One single participant, who wasn't in a relationship told me that she preferred a *union libre* so that she wouldn't have to worry about the expense of a wedding, and the security of knowing that if it didn't work out, she could leave and wouldn't have to worry about seeing her ex-partner ever again. Some people might interpret this phenomenon as a lack or reluctance to commitment, but if people are happy with their *union libre* and they stay together, maybe it does just boil down to finances and the perception that weddings and legal marriage are too expensive for some members of this population. What else would explain the fact that 88% of women who participate in NGOs have chosen not to be married, and 60% of men who participate in NGOs also have no interest in marriage? Based on the data and the information I received about on this subject from the study participants, marriage doesn't seem to be a factor at all when people decide to participate in an Ecuadorian NGO or group. Looking at the chart above reaffirms that because there are more unmarried people than married people on it.

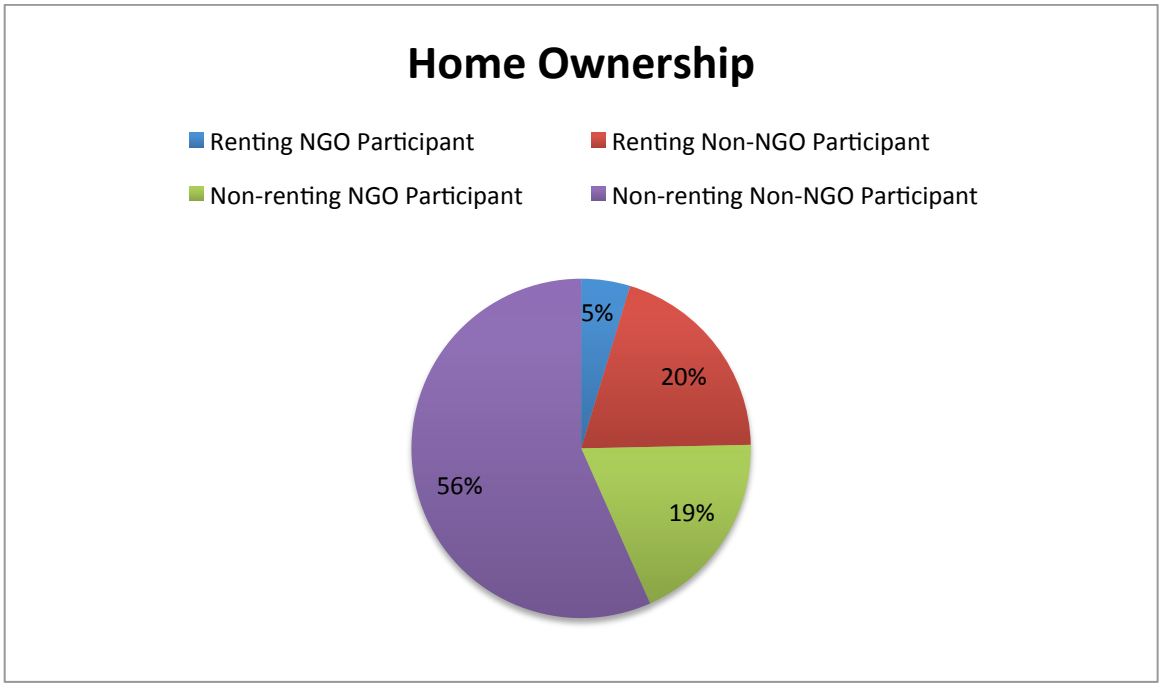
EDUCATION:

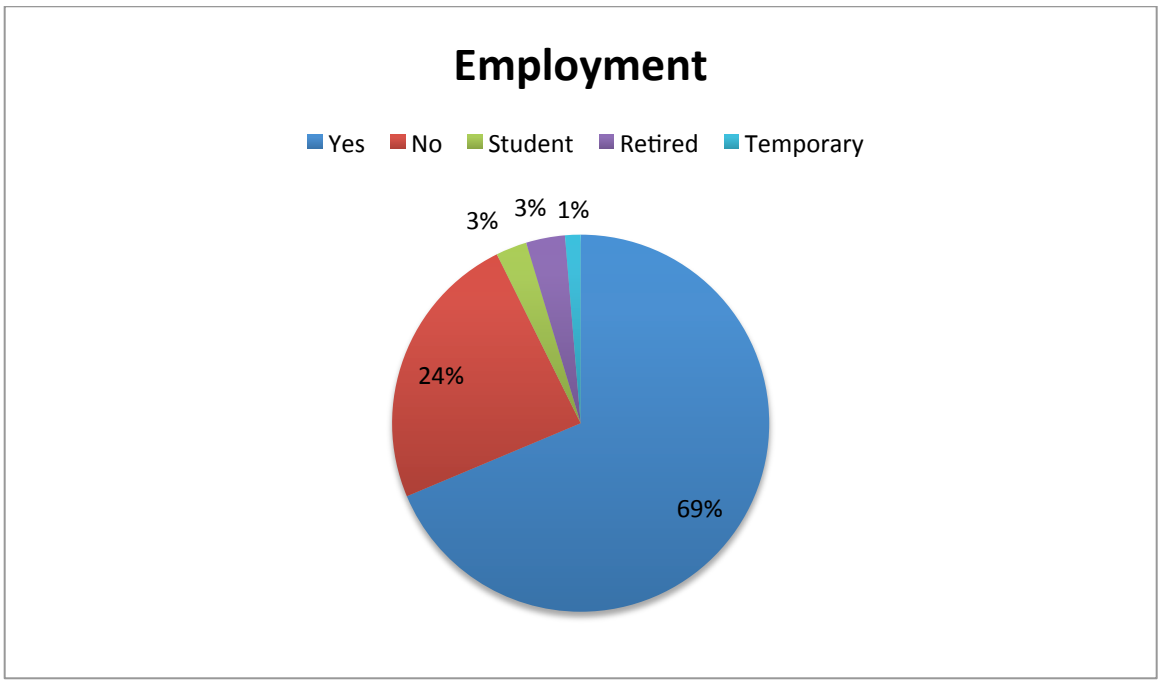


Breakdown of Highest Level of Education Achieved:	Total:	Women NGO Participants	Women non-NGO Participants	Men NGO Participants	Men non-NGO Participants
Primary:	36	9	10	1	16
High School:	83	12	26	3	42
University*:	27	3	14	6	4
Didn't finish Primary School:	4	1	2	1	1

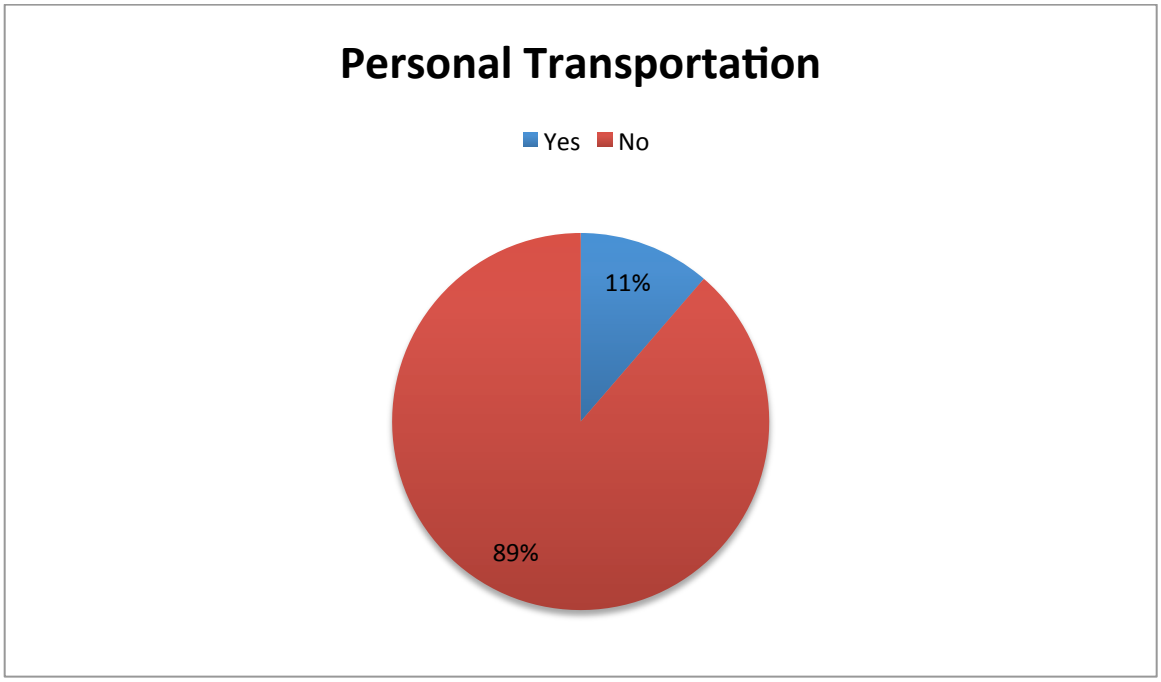
Note: 29 people did go to the university but did not complete their courses.

PERSONAL WEALTH:

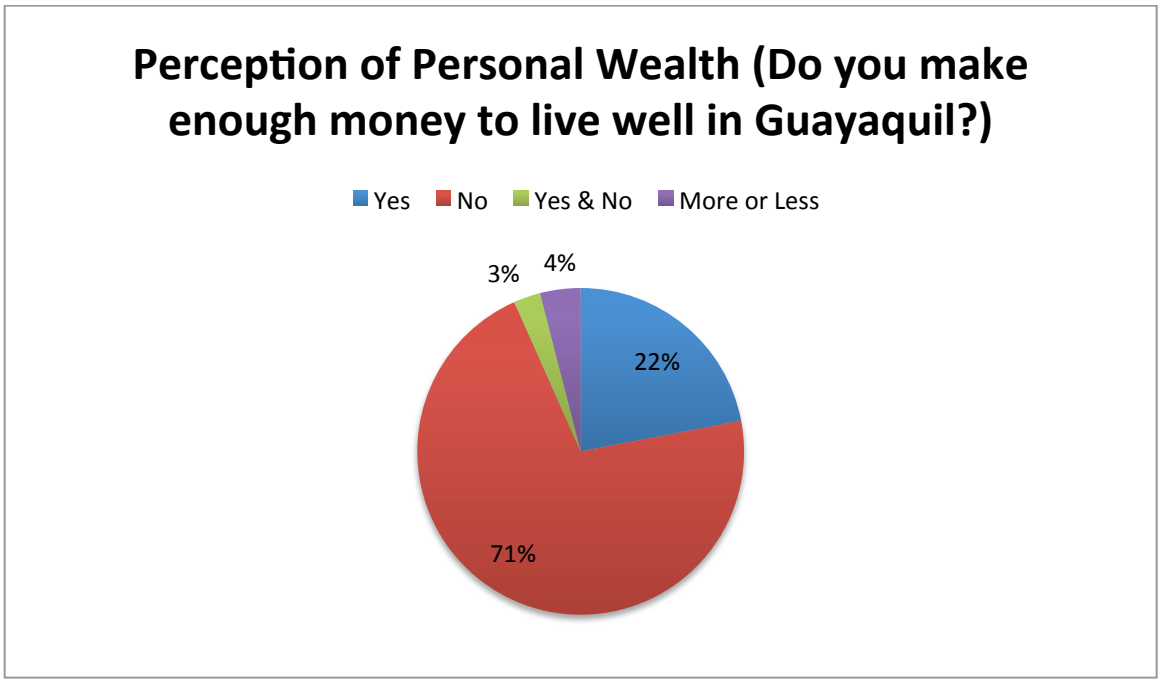




Employment Breakdown by Gender and NGO Participation	Total	Women NGO Participants	Women non-NGO Participants:	Men NGO Participants:	Men non-NGO Participants
Yes	103	12	35	6	50
No	36	13	15	3	5
No, student	4	0	2	0	2
No, retired	5	0	0	0	5
Temporary	2	0	0	1	1



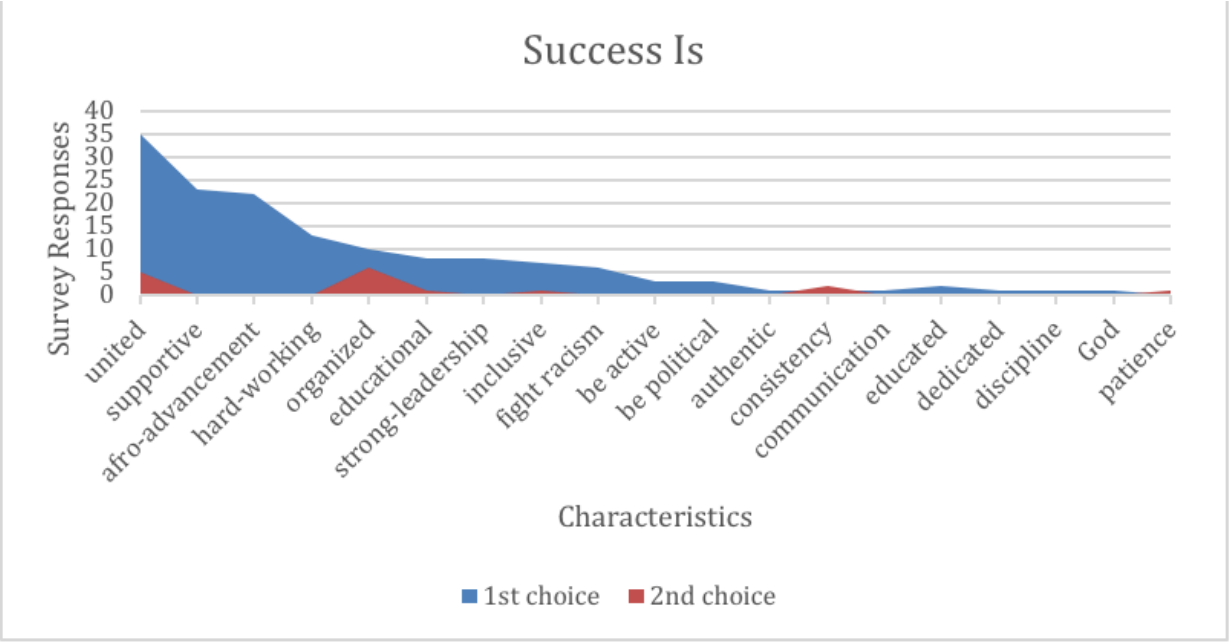
Personal Transportation Breakdown by Gender and NGO Participation					
		Women NGO Participants:	Women non-NGO Participants:	Men NGO Participants:	Men non-NGO Participants
Yes	17	1	7	0	9
No	133	24	45	10	54



Make enough money for Guayaquil?	Total:	Women NGO Participants:	Women non-NGO Participants:	Men NGO Participants:	Men non-NGO Participants:
Yes	33	3	11	0	19
No	107	21	39	8	39
Yes & no	4	0	0	1	3
More or less	6	1	2	1	2

Being Successful

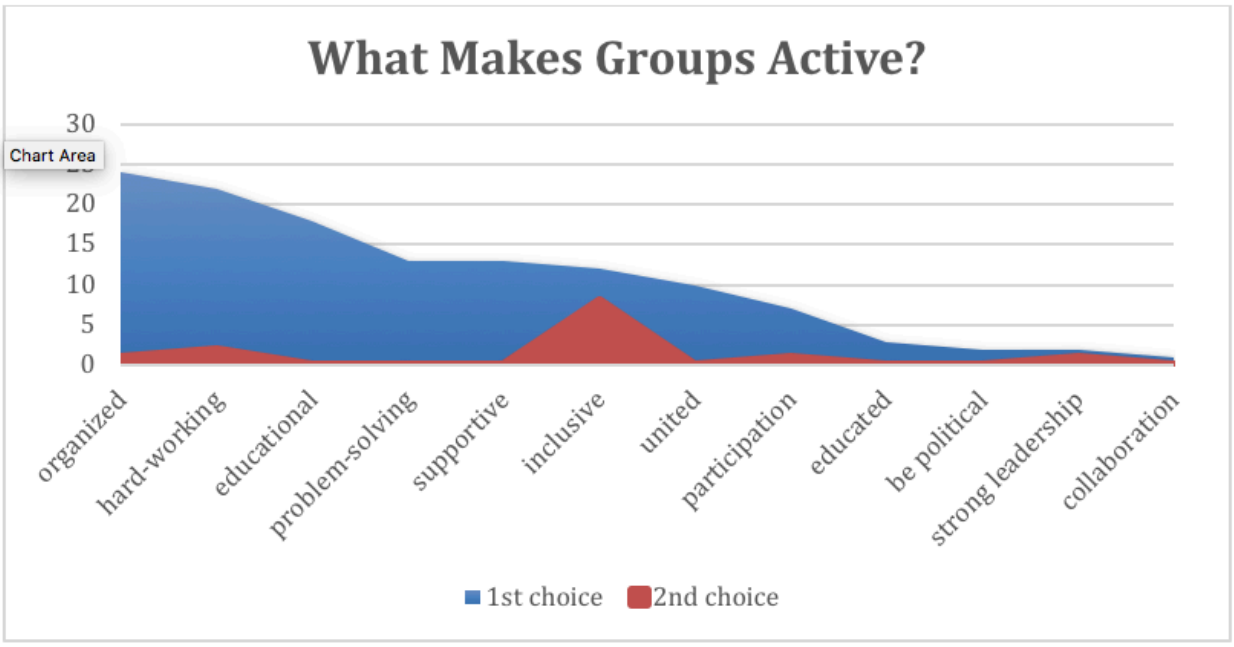
What Makes and Afro-Ecuadorian NGO Successful?



There is a range of different characteristics that this population used to define successfulness. The characteristics above are coded from the responses that participants shared with me, and the most popular one was [being] united. The concept of union and unity is at the top of this list and many others. This could be interpreted two ways: First, the lower amount participation and the multiple references to unity and disunion are serious aspects in their society that need to improve for this community on a macro scale. Secondly, unity was and perhaps still is very important to many of

the survey takers. The survey participants also felt that [being] supportive, organized and hardworking were all key to having a successful organization.

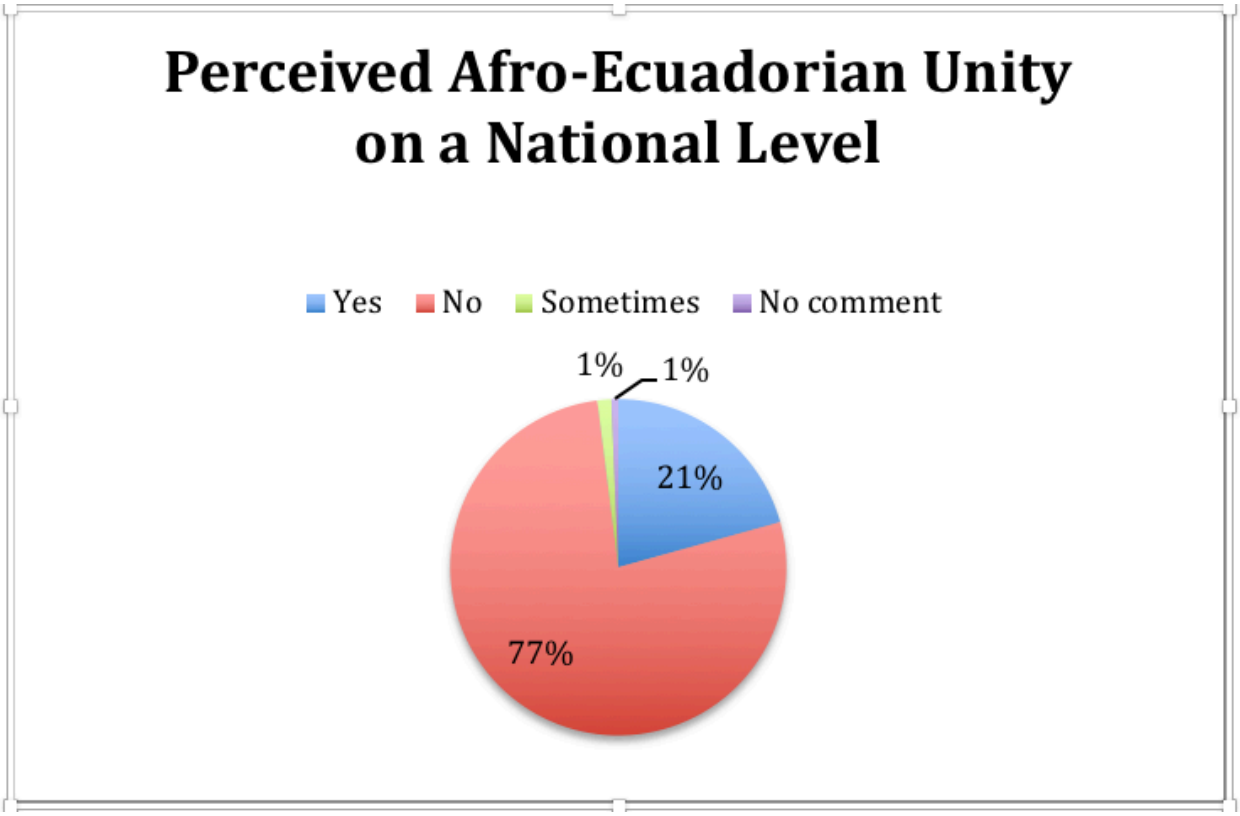
What Makes an Afro-Ecuadorian NGO Active?

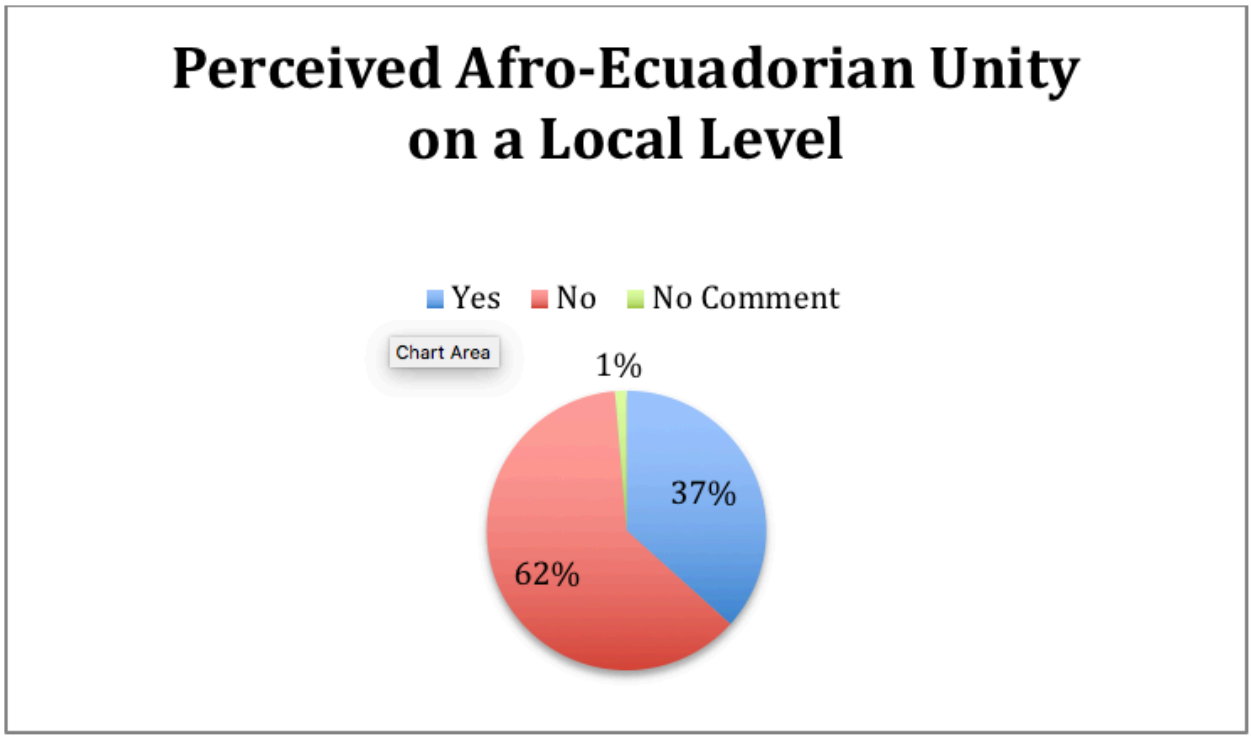


This population expected active groups to be very hard-working and educational.

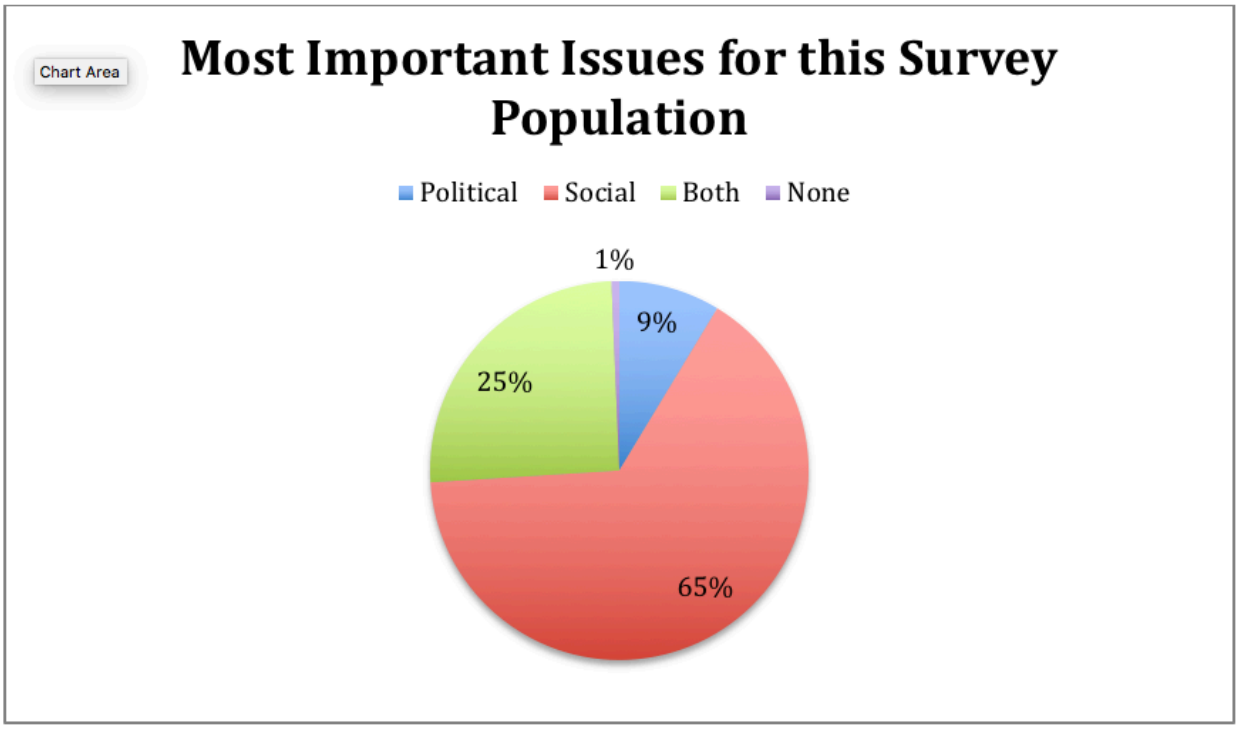
UNITY?

Perceived Unity of Afro-Ecuadorians:

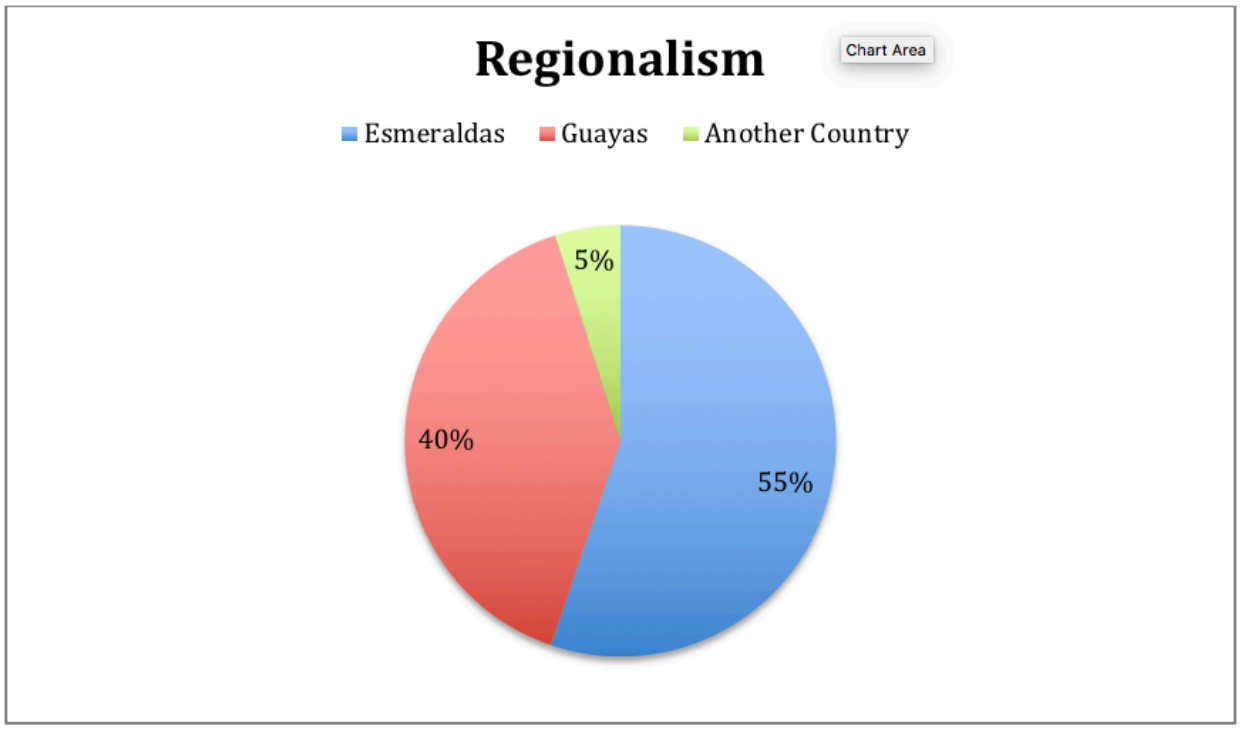




There is a lot of red on these two charts, and 77% of the survey takers felt that Afro-Ecuadorians were not united on a national level, while 62% said that people were not united at a local level either.



	WP:	WN:	MP:	MN:	Issue total:
political	3	0	1	9	13
social	14	41	5	38	98
Both social and political	8	11	4	15	38
none	0	0	0	1	1
				Total:	150


Regionalism
Chart Area
Esmeraldas
Guayas
Another Country
5%
40%
55%

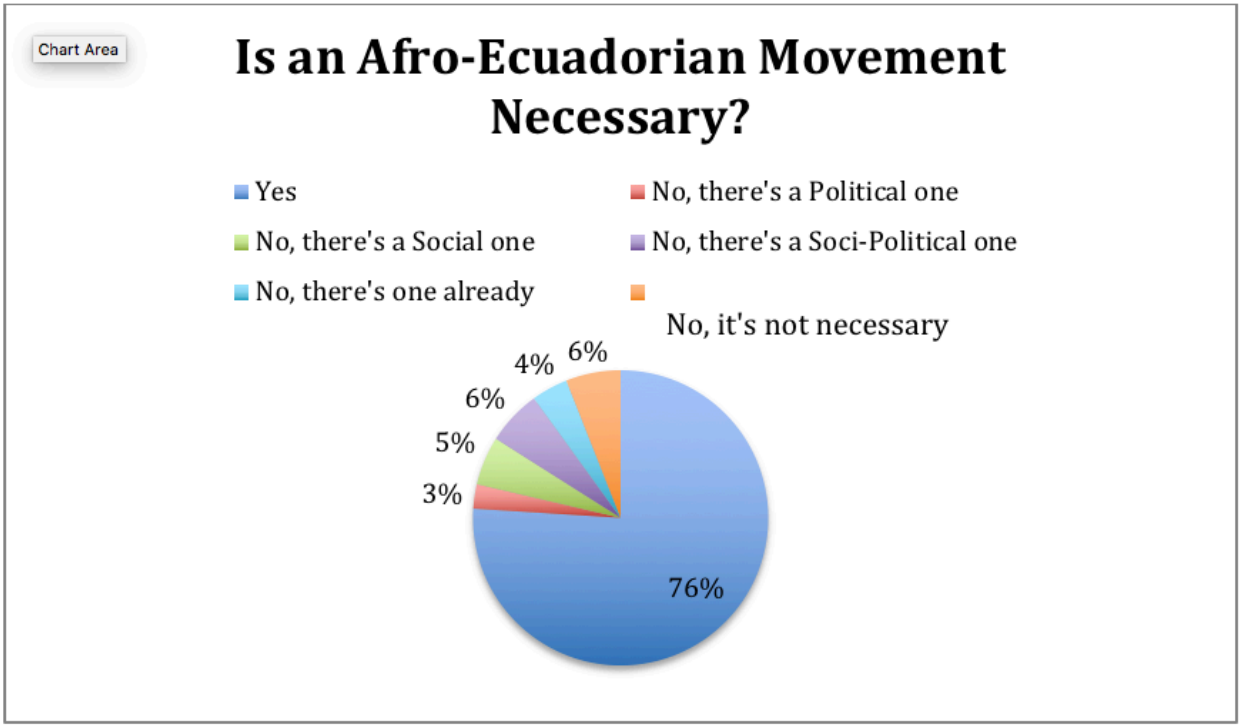


Chart Area
Is an Afro-Ecuadorian Movement Necessary?
Yes
No, there's a Political one
No, there's a Social one
No, there's a Soci-Political one
No, there's one already
No, it's not necessary
4%
6%
6%
5%
3%
76%